Book III

(To be kept in the University office)

Note — As this is the third carbon-copy, therefore the impression of the typed words is not so and clear as in the previous two copies. So I request the University authorities to keep this copy (of the thesis) for record in their office, and to send the other two copies to the respective examiners. I hope the authorities will be kind enough to act accordingly.

V. P. Khanna
24.4.49

Nara

HINDI DRAMA

(From its rise to the Present day)

By

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1949



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INTRODUCTION.

In our country the tradition of Drama is really very old, at least as old as that in any other country of the world. Sanskrit drama is not only one of the oldest dramas of the world; it is very rich and exuberant at the same time. While Kālidāsa has earned a world-wide reputation for his immortal 'Śakuntalā', other playwrights like Bhavabhūti, Bhāsa, Viśākhadatta etc. have also earned a lasting fame for their memorable contributions.

But while the regular chain of Sanskrit drama broke off as early as the eleventh or the twelfth century A.D., the foundations of regular Hindi Drama were laid as late as the middle of the ninteenth century. By that time Hindi had completed about eight hundred years of its existence, and had made a remarkable progress in the field of poetry. Bhāratendu Hariścandra, with some of his celebrated contemporaries like Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, Śrī Nivāsa Dāsa etc. dominated the ninteenth century Hindi drama. But as in the days of Bhāratendu, Hindi drama rose with a sudden speed, in the same way it speedily declined after the death of that reputed writer.

While today Hindi drama is flourishing in all branches with vigour and variety, one finds a deplorable lack of critical literature in that field. As compared with other branches of Hindi literature (especially poetry) very little has been written on Hindi drama so far. Hardly any author has undertaken a carefully critical survey of the entire Hindi drama -- from its rise to the present day (1948). While one or two scholars have done appreciable work in ninteenth century drama, the twentieth century and more especially the modern period (1925-48) has been grossly neglected.

And this was the reason for which I selected this subject for my thesis. Finding the comparative lack of scientific criticism on Hindi drama, I, being interested both in the reading and writing of drama more than any other branch of Hindi literature, sought to fill up this gap by attempting a complete critical survey of Hindi drama in the form of a thesis.

Wisely, and in order to make my work upto-date and an improvement on all previous attempts I have made use of all available material. But while I have read the various critical scholars carefully, I have read the original plays even more carefully and thoroughly. In spite of carefully going through the available material -- whatever little or more it was -- I have preferred to form my own independent opinion on all points and plays. The entire criticism

of plays and the treatment of various problems is, therefore, strictly original and my own. Moreover, I have abstained from unhealthy controversies and have avoided all hostile criticism of other authors, my only purpose in writing this work being some original contribution to the critical side of Hindi drama. Quite independently I have arrived at all conclusions, regardless of the fact as to whether my findings go against or agree with those of other authors. Besides, I have thrown light on several points which had been altogether left aside by other authorities or has just been touched by them.

At the same time I may confess that my thesis aims to be more suggestive than exhaustive. The subject of my thesis being very lengthy, it has not been possible for me to deal with every playwright at great length. A detailed account of every playwright can find a place in an exhaustive history of Hindi drama and not a critical work of this nature. While I, on my part, have discussed all important playwrights and problems of Hindi drama at the same time I have chosen to be brief and to be point. No irrelevant matter has been included nor have any words been wasted here.

Besides referring to the leading tendencies in Hindi drama in different periods, I have also dealt with leading playwrights and their works. While representative and important plays have been included for critical appreciation, too ordinary ones have been deliberately dropped. Even there, I have not been able to say every word or the last word on every play or playwright. My subject was so unweildy that it was impossible for me to do so. A single playwright like Bhāratendu, Jaya Śankara Prasād, Seth Govind Das or Udaya Śankara Bhatta etc., or a single topic like Hindi one-act-play or Historical Drama etc. would have sufficed for that purpose. An independent thesis on each of these subjects could have done full justice to them.

Now to add a few words on the thesis itself. In the very opening Chapter I have briefly referred to all those reasons -- political, social and religious -- that were responsible for the late rise of Hindi drama. Next I have discussed various medieval forms of entertainment like the Rāsa-līlā, Rāma-līlā and the Nautankis etc. ; I have tried to show that our standard Hindi drama did not develop directly from these forms. These performances inspite of their partly dramatic qualities, maintained their independent status from the medieval times to the present day.

Besides dealing with various Hindi dramas before Bharatendu, I have described the main factors that were responsible for the rise of regular Hindi drama. Although Hindi drama rose at a very belated time, yet it made very rapid progress after its rise. Bharatendu himself wrote a rich variety of plays ; and the dramatic tradition set up by him was promptly carried on by his contemporaries and successors. But as in the days of Bharatendu, Hindi drama rose with marked rapidity, in a similar way it speedily declined after the death of that reputed writer. Various reasons of this rapid decline of Hindi drama have been enumerated in chapter VIII.

The period between 1885 and 1912 can be rightly called a sterile period in the history of Hindi drama. In this period we come across hardly a single original play that can claim a genuine appreciation. All the same this period showed great progress in translations, and numerous beautiful plays of Sanskrit Bengali and English were translated into Hindi by distinguished scholars.

After stepping over the sterile period we descend upon a very flourishing period of Hindi drama (1912-1930). This period is dominated by the colossal personality of Jaya Sankara Prasad, and playwrights like Milinda, Bhatta, Ugra and Sudarshan etc. also made their respective contributions. More flourishing than the above period is our modern period with its rich variety of ~~the~~ drama. Several types of drama, like Historical dramas, Mythological dramas, Problems Plays, Lyrical dramas, Allegorical dramas and One-Act-Plays were written by numberless writers, and these have been discussed at some length in a number of chapters.

In addition to the literary drama, a separate chapter has beendevoted to the history and criticism of Parsi Theatrical dramas. Another chapter deals with the history of Hindi stage from the earliest times to the present day. The technique of Hindi drama has been discussed in two different chapters. As the technique of ninteenth century drama is greatly different from the modern dramatic technique, I have discursed each one of them in a separate chapter.

Prognostication in literary matters is, of course, a difficult and a hazardous task. Still, in the concluding chapter I have expressed some hopes about the future of Hindi drama. In addition to that I have made a practical suggestion, which, if materialised, can definitely improve the lot of Hindi drama, and can educate the taste of the masses.

The system followed in the transliteration of Sanskrit words is that approved by the Royal Asiatic society. However, some conventional words and proper names are spelt in the popular manner. In footnotes, the names of different plays have been given in Devanagari for convenience. The dates of compositions of various plays have been given according to the Christian era, unless stated otherwise.

In short I have tried to produce the work to the best of my ability and

(Please see on the reverse)

satisfaction. My learned Supervisor, Prof. Gauri Shankar M.A. B.Litt. (Oxon.), --- whom I shall be every grateful for his encouragement and valuable guidance --- is highly pleased with my work. And I am sure that my learned examiners too will be likewise satisfied with a careful study of my thesis, and I hope they will understand and appreciate the amount of labour I have put in for this thesis.

Ved Paul Khanna

(Ved Paul Khanna)

Simla,
24-4-1949.

BEGINNINGS OF HINDI DRAMA.

Chapter I.

Causes of the Lack of Hindi Drama before the Middle of the Ninteenth Century.

Already before Bhāratendu Hariś-candra, Hindi had completed about eight hundred years of its existence. It had also made a remarkable progress in the field of poetry. But when we turn our attention towards Drama, the very first thing that strikes us is the lack of early Hindi Drama. Before Bhāratendu, the first great Hindi play-wright, we come across hardly a dozen plays. Of these too, with the exception of one or two, all others are only plays in name, because they are wanting in the essential characteristics of drama. Sanskrit literature is, no doubt, extremely exuberant in drama; still, Hindi, no matter descended from Sanskrit through Prakrit and Apabhramśa stages, is so poor in the same branch of literature.

There were several reasons, political, social and religious, which were responsible for this lack of Hindi drama before Bhāratendu, i.e. before the middle of the ninteenth century. The first important phenomenon that stood in the way of the rise of Hindi drama was the political choas and unrest that swayed the country for centuries after the death of Harsha. Ever since the birth of this new Vernacular, the country was passing through an era of unprecedented strife, internal and external. The country was divided into so many small principalities, usually warring with each other and seldom falling together to face a common foe. Due to mutual hostilities and constant danger of foreign invasions, the very existence of these states was threatened at all hours. They had ever to get ready for engagement in battle with their neighbours, kinsfolk or foreign invaders.

This being the state of affairs, there could have possibly been very little scope for drama, which needs ample time, peace and expenditure for perfection. The huge expenditure on the maintenance of strong military strength did not permit the princes to lavish money on costly entertainments like drama. Moreover, the constant fear of conflict and war kept their mind too busy to attend to these amusements.

Sanskrit drama, as also the Greek and Roman drama, flourished so much on account of the State patronization that was extended to them. This being denied to Hindi drama due to afore-mentioned factors, its rise and progress was held up for many centuries till the changed political conditions prompted its rise and subsequent rapid growth.

Two factors, we find, are generally responsible for the progress and popularity of drama. It is either the state encouragement or the backing of the public that leads to the prosperity of drama. It was State patronage that led to the immense prosperity of Elizabethan drama (as also of Sanskrit drama), while the public support and encouragement is responsible for the progress and prosperity of modern English drama. State patronage could not be offered to Hindi drama as we have stated above. At the same time the absence of an undisturbed peace and continued prosperity, which essentially must precede the rise or development of drama, discouraged the public also from thinking of such a pastime.

Moreover, in no language could ever drama rise as soon as the langugage itself came into existence. For centuries together the langugage has to go through a gradual process of stabilisation, systematization and finish, before it can serve as a proper medium for drama. Further, poetry alone cannot impart that particular histrionic touch and force to drama, for which a developed, forceful and fully emballished prose is essential. And we know how long did the good Hindi prose take to come into form after the birth of the Hindi language. It was as late as the middle of the ninteenth century that the foundations of a standard Hindi prose were laid by Lallu Lal and a few of his contemporaries. It was only after this time that drama could have been successfully attempted or expected in Hindi. As there was no fixed form of Hindi prose before Bhāratendu, so there was no drama worth the name before that reputed writer.

Again we find that drama is not merely a part of literature. It is always dependent on the theatre for its development as for its rise. Reading a play, satisfactory though it may be to some, especially those with a vivid imagination, can never take the place of seeing it in the theatre. The reader may have read and studied a play dozens of times, but until he has seen a capable company of actors actually perform it before an audience, the play has never really come to life for him. The stage is not only an impetus to the rise and growth of drama, it is altogether indispensable. Accordingly Bengali drama is much older than Hindi drama greatly because the theatre existed much earlier in Bengal than in the Hindi-speaking area. In Hindi we had no stage before the time of Bhāratendu, who himself realised its immense need for the growth of drama, and established it for that purpose for the first time. But for this absence of stage before Bhāratendu, the long period preceding him perhaps would not have been so sterile in drama. And with the introduction of stage by Bhāratendu, we witness a quick profundity in Hindi drama, which again swiftly slowed down when the stage was thrown out of use soon after his death.

For the rise and growth of great drama, not only is it essential that the plays should be brought to life by being performed on the stage, but also that the actors must hold a respected place in society. Drama always prospers as the actors gain more esteem and regard in common society; it is bound to suffer as the actors are held in bad repute, and are hated for their alleged immorality.

In Western countries, persons of noble birth and high pedigree do not hesitate in participating in the performance of plays; rather they take pride in it, in spite of all criticism and cry of the Puritans. On the other hand the actors in our country have not been able to raise themselves high in the books of the people, although the days are also gone when they were hated or looked down upon. But in the early days of Hindi drama they had earned a distinctly bad reputation, and their private lives were supposed to be far from moral. In fact, low class people like the 'Merasis' and others, with undignified and morbid habits formed the actor-class in those days. They were not decent citizens with a dignified and respectable air around them.

Naturally there were people (and they are there even at this time)

who were instinctively, suspicious of such forms of entertainment. Even today, in country districts and even in backward elements of the towns, one frequently meets men and women who believe that dancing, theatre-going and many other popular pastimes are dangerous and disgraceful. The theatre has ever been suffering from bad reputation, at least in India. It was discouraged and disliked by more than those who patronized and encouraged it.

It is this neglect, hate and disregard of the actor, especially in medieval times, that checked the growth of Hindi drama in its full-fledged form.

There was yet another tendency which stood in the way of Hindi drama, and which did not permit it to gain its legitimate ground for a long time. In medieval times, especially in the Bhakti age, it had been customary with the scholars and the genius to parade their learning through the medium of poetry. Great scholars and thinkers always chose to cultivate their talents in the field of poetry, and add to its wealth. They never thought of any other form- prose-story, novel or drama- as a suitable medium for their thought. They vied with each other in exploring the old established channel of poetry, than inventing some new form of literature, where their chances of success were uncertain though not meagre.

This tendency of adopting poetry alone as the medium of literature was not the weakness only of the Hindi writer. In English literature also we find that before the rise of drama, poetry had already covered a few centuries of its growth.

In order to understand and appreciate drama in proper, the public has got to be more sensitive, alive to entertainment and advanced in literary taste than to appreciate narrative poems. It is much easier for a raw or semi-cultured public to understand and enjoy poetical recitations (and still more if they be from religious books) than a more literary, ornate and advanced form of literature, viz. drama, which may easily fail to elicit their applause. As the public taste gets more refined and cultured, they begin to be more alive to dramatic performances, making them a popular form of entertainment. It seems that for some centuries before Bhāratendu, the general public was not sufficiently aroused to

dramatic performances, and rejoiced more in recitations, sermons from Sadhus or poetic demonstrations of the genius. In those conditions the idea of a prose drama could not easily strike an ordinary mind.

The Islamic rule, which lasted for so many centuries in India, also proved another set-back to the growth of Hindi drama. It was greatly responsible for keeping the lid tight on the dramatic tendencies which may rise in people's mind from time to time. As a result of Mohammadan invasions and their subsequent victories, the temples and the princely courts, which were the only two homes of such performances during the period of Hindu regime, began to fall a prey to the religious passion and vindictive pride of the conquerors.

Moreover, Islam strictly bans all types of entertainments, especially those of the nature of drama. And though this religious ban did not directly hinder the growth of Hindi drama, yet indirectly it proved no less detrimental, as this is the natural weakness of the ordinary man to act according to the taste and whims of his rulers.

The reign of stern Puritans like Aurangzeb, who would not tolerate the presence even of music throughout the whole length and breadth of his empire, proved most annihilating to the artistic pursuits of the people. Even those Moghul princes who patronised music and other fine arts did not encourage the growth of drama. Historical evidence proves that while the conditions were contrary in the north, Sanskrit drama and the dramatic art in general were quite popular in the Deccan as the Islamic influence could not travel to that land during the first few centuries of Muslim rule in Northern India.

Nor could the Indians get any inspiration in this field from the Persian and Arabic literatures of their Muslim rulers, as they received from the drama of the West under the English rule.

But when one notices that 'Inder Sabha', the first drama of the Hindi language was written by a Muslim author at the court of a Muslim Chief, one is likely to be puzzled. The idea of a drama coming from the pen of a Muslim and produced at the court of a Muslim is certainly surprising, if not startling. But as we go a little deep, we find the puzzle solve itself. We must bear in mind that it was only the more or less

orthodox element among the Muslims that was hostile to the idea of drama. But by the time of 'Indar Sabha', the Mohammadans had lost much of their religious passion and orthodox nature. The Muslim princes and nobles like Siraj-ud-daulah, Mir Jafar, Mir Qasim and others had shaken off their Islamic bigotry and participated even in the celebrations of Hindu festivals of Spring, Holi and Dewali etc. The Nawabs of Avadh even surpassed their other Muslim friends in leading highly gay, romantic and in many ways Un-Islamic lines. Therefore, 'Indar Sabha', produced no doubt by a Muslim pen at a Muslim court had nothing to do with the passionate and bigoted Muslim invaders and early conquerors.

As a matter of fact, after the Battle of Buxar (1764) the Avadh Durbar gradually came under the influence of Western modes of life, and the fashions and customs of the West. Avadh came in close contact with the West, and European embassies, missionaries, scholars and travellers were frequently dropping in the capital of that State. The Nawabs of Avadh quickly developed a taste for European diet, dress and entertainments. So, it was in fact under the European influence, and not as a result of the Muslim encouragement, that 'Inder-Sabha' was produced.

Apart from the above factors, there was another cause rather phenomenon, that retarded the growth of Hindi drama. During the early Moghul period, especially in the 15th and 16th centuries, a religious movement swept the whole of the Northern India. This Bhakti movement led to the rise of several new sects like those of Kabir, Nanak, Dadoo and others. A huge bulk of religious literature of a sectarian nature was produced under the influence of this movement. This movement was very wide, and as it started with the common man, it had a deep effect on the literature and ideas of those days. The one permanent note of this cult which is so frequently repeated in the teachings of Kabir and other poets of this movement, is that there was nothing but misery in this world. And the only remedy of this worldly woe and misery, as preached by these poets, was not any struggle against that misery, but the renunciation of the world. Their cry of fatalism meant, in other words, bidding farewell to all activities of the world. This made the world pessimistic, cynical and idle. Malukdasa, one of these poets, preaches in-action in a very simple yet effective manner—

Drama, on the other hand, is essentially a picture of the swiftly moving and progressive society. This atmosphere of wide in-action and idleness was absolutely unfavourable for the rise and growth of a swift and active thing like drama.

So we find that all these factors combined together to delay the rise of real Hindi drama till the middle of the ninteenth century. A wide gap of about a thousand years separates the end of the tradition of Sanskrit drama from the beginning of our Hindi drama, although a few solitary specimens of both the Sanskrit and the Hindi dramas are available during this sterile period.

Chapter II   EARLY TYPES OF HINDI DRAMA.

In almost all the countries of the world the origin of drama in its earliest form is strictly or somewhat religious. It is the spirit of hero-worship or some religious zeal that gradually takes the form of drama, although such drama is too simple and even crude in its original form.

In the case of Hindu masses too, drama originally rose in the form of some performances, which were instigated by the spirit of hero-worship or some religious zeal and devotion. As these performances gradually advanced and improved, the elements of drama began to make their appearance in them. Steadily these performances became more and more dramatic, although this process was unconscious and perennial. Besides the mere satisfaction of their devotional zeal, the masses, with the passage of time, began to look for some easy means of entertainment in those very religious performances. No doubt their chief aim continued to be religious, but, alongside of it a persistent effort was naturally made to make these performances more and more interesting, entertaining and attractive, both to the eye as well as to the ear. In different parts of the Hindi-speaking area, people had different tastes and devotion for different ~~duties~~ deities or heroes. As their taste and devotion varied, distinct forms of drama developed in different places. In order to provide greater amusement to the eye and the ear, music and dance were later introduced in the structure of these performances.

Rāma-līlā   Consequently, there rose three distinct types of drama in different districts of the Hindi-speaking area. In Avadh, Banares and Mithilā Rama-līla became prominent, although in Rajputana, Central Provinces, Western U.P. East Punjab and Mysore also this form was equally present. In the eastern districts of U.P. which were the home of Rāma-līlā, the whole life of Rama was represented in a dramatic form throughout the month of Āświn.

In Upper India Rāma-līlā occupies the place and season which Durga Puja does in Bengal. Both are marked by exceptional grandeur. The festival of Rāma, in its present form at any rate, is said to have originated in the famous version of the Rāmāyaṇa of Tulsīdāsa. In almost every town and important village of the above mentioned districts, nearly the whole of the Rāmāyaṇa is recited during the month of Aswin, and whatever events are capable of being represented, are exhibited simultaneously with the recitations. The scenery is sought to be made real as far as possible; for instance, when the Ganges or the sea is required, the scene is shifted to the bank of some pond or stream. Separate gardens receive the designation of the chief forests mentioned in the poem and different temples and buildings represent the palaces of the princes.

The dignity, gravity and joy of the richly decorated children impersonating Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā are remarkable. The marriage procession of Rāma is a grand show, and the grand assembly of chiefs and princely suitors in Janaka's palace is an interesting sight.

<u>Rāsa-līlā</u>

In Mathurā, Vṛndāvana and the surrounding areas, the second type of these performances known as the Rāsa-līlā was more popular, and is no less popular today. In Rāsa-līlā the romantic love of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā is beautifully represented. Two small boys impersonate Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, while others assume the role of cowherds and milk-maids. The whole show culminates in a merry-go-round when the fascinating cowherd (Kṛṣṇa), wearing a peacock-crown and a perfumed garland dances and sings with the chorus. The devout spectators are so credulous that for the time they verily worship the boy as Kṛṣṇa himself.

Even today these Rāsa-dhārīs are by no means extinct, although the cinema has sufficiently restricted their scope. Their companies travel to the East Punjab in the North and Hyderabad, in the south. Their performances inspire local talent, and they are imitated by other amateur groups belonging to the areas they visit. During the rainy season and particularly the month of Śrāvana (Sāwan) these teams are very busy in places like Vṛndāvana and Mathurā, which are associated with the life-story of the deity. Thousands of visitors from the East Punjab and other parts of the country flock to these places even today during this month.

Nautankis In the North-Western U.P., Delhi and especially in the Punjab there was popular another form of drama popularly known as 'Nautankī' or 'Sangīta'. These 'Nautankīs', which had much in common with the Parsi stage, were private touring theatresx, mostly run by the devotees of the Rāma-cult of Ayodhyā and the neighbouring areas; they usually staged the important events from the life of Rāma and other heroes of the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas. This type of entertainment resembled drama most in its essentials, although it was not so refined and finished as real drama.

Apart from representing the events connected with epics and the Purāṇas, more modern and mundane heroes also served as their themes. The stories of Gopi Chand, Puran Bhakta and Hakikat Rai are extremely popular with the Punjab masses even today. The last-named is too modern and belongs to the late Moghul period, while the former two are connected with a period of early Hindu history. Plays based on them were (and even are) frequently staged by these troupes of actors in towns as well as villages, sometimes with conventional music and dancing. The ideal of renunciation of the world, heroic self-sacrifice and martyrdom are the qualities which endear them to so many hearts.

Like the Rāsadhārī troupes, these 'Nautankīs' also visit very far places and even remote villages. Like Rāsa-līlā, these 'Nautankīs' too have a proper stage, although the stage of both these performances is very simple and of a domestic nature. The feminine roles are played by tender-aged boys in ladies' dress.

Influence of these Forms on Later Hindi Drama

Rāma-līlā. Ordinarily Rāma-līlā comes before the audience only in the form of dialogue. It is essentially lacking in stage and other dramatic elements. Besides, the subject-matter of Rāma-līlā is so unweildy, that it does not suit the restricted time, space and action of drama. It is true that, in addition to mere versification, these dialogues of Rama-lila possess sufficient amount of character-grandeur; but most of the audience does not go to Rāma-līlā in order to appreciate the beauties of versification or character-painting. Undoubtedly, they find more pleasure in the heated conversation of Lakṣmaṇa and Paraśurāma than in the ideal utterances

aṅkīs   In the North-Western U.P., Delhi and especially in the Punjab there was popular another form of drama popularly known as 'Nauṭaṅkī' or 'Sāṅgīts'. These 'Nauṭaṅkīs', which had much in common with the rural stage, were private touring theatres, mostly run by the devotees of the Rāma-cult of Ayodhyā and the neighbouring areas; they usually staged the important events from the life of Rāma and other heroes of the Mahābhāra and the Purāṇas. This type of entertainment resembled drama most in its essentials, although it was not so refined and finished as real drama.

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of Sītā when she persistently prays to Rāma to permit her to accompany him to the forest, although the latter dialogue is a much finer specimen of character-grandeur.

In fact Rāma-līlā could not cross the strictly religious bounds, and did not develop the essential features of drama. The type of drama which developed under the influence of Rāma-līlā contained nothing more than conversation, in both prose and verse. Some specimens of this kind of drama are available before Bhāratendu, 'Hanumāna Nāṭaka' of Hṛdaya Rāma (17th century A.D.), 'Rāma-līlā Vihāra Nāṭaka' of Kṛṣṇa Śarmā (18th century), Harirama's 'Jānakī-rāma-caritra Nāṭaka' (19th century) and Braj-Vāsidāsa's 'Prabodha Candrodaya' are plays that are nothing more than metrical narration of the events of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

Rāsa-līlā On the other hand the development of the theatre is noticeable more in Rāsa-līlā. In Rāsa-līlā are represented the love-sports of Kṛṣṇa and the milkmaids including Radha. These being small in size and short in duration could suit the limited time, space and action of drama. Rasa-lila made use of the stage too, although it was very simple and too ordinary. Its sweet, melodious songs, being mostly the stanzas and lyrics from Sūra Dāsa, were simply captivating.

But these Rāsa-līlās too were not altogether free from defects. Their dialogue used to be irrelevant, and their action unnatural. Simple, brief and concise as they were, they totally lacked the epic- grandeur, forceful dialogue and character - beauty, which were the essential features of Rama-lila. As a matter of fact, a balanced and wise combination of the prominent features of both Rama-lila and Rasa-lila — music and sentiment of Rasa-lila and epic-grandeur, forceful dialogue and character-painting of Rama-lila would have developed into an excellent form of drama. Still, in some measure, Rāsa-līlā can be called the successor of our ancient Indian drama, and a simple precursor of later Hindi drama. It retained the essential elements of drama, namely, sentiment, the chief force of drama and music with dance as a means of entertainment. 'Śrī Candrāvalī' of Bharatendu betrays great influence of Rasa-lila, and by writing 'Śrī Chadma Yoginī Nāṭikā' in the twentieth century, Śrī Viyogi Hari' has once again sought the revival of Rāsa-līlā.

In short we can say that although some of the essential elements of drama were present in Rama-lila, Rasa-lila and 'Nautanki', still later Hindi drama did not develop directly from these forms. These performances, in spite of their partly dramatic qualities, maintained their independent existence from the medieval times to the present day. At best they were only the remnants of ancient Indian drama, but they could not give rise to the proper Hindi drama. Doubtless they had a plot, culled mostly from religious books and related to the beloved heroes and great personalities of the past. Also they had a melodious music and a bewitching classical dance. Still they could not flourish into full-fleded drama. The drama of the Parsi Theatrical Companies which introduced a regular stage as also beautiful scenery and attractive make-up in their theatre left little audience or liking for these forms. The simple, rustic stage used in these performances had no adequate force to compete with the comparatively modern, more advanced and scientific stage that the Parsi Theatres borrowed from the West. Consequently, these performances, instead of developing into some maturer form speedily declined, and the Parsi theatre held the day for a number of years.

Apart from these external causes, these early types of performances suffered from an inherent weakness too. Obviously, they did not possess much material for development and progress. The undramatic element was more prominent in them than the dramatic element. For example, Rasa-lila had very little of dialogue, which is the singular force of drama. Still less it had action, so necessary for the development of drama. The chief thing that it possessed was music. Rama-lila, on the other hand, was very unweildy. In 'Nautanki', the medium of conversation was verse, and action, though sufficiently more than in Rasa-lila was still meagre for drama, and this meagreness of action was often made up by introducing melodramatic and sensational element.

Other Popular forms In addition to Rama-lila, Rasa-lila and Nautanki, the three main medieval forms of drama, many other minor performances were also popular in different parts of the country. On the occasions of various festivals, the main events of the lives of mythological heroes associated* with those festivals were presented in a somewhat crude dramatic form. Such performances were very popular in Vrndavana, and the North-Western and

*'The Drama and the Dramatic dances of the Non-European races' by Sir William Ridgway Pages 172-84

South-Western U.P., and belong mostly to the Moghul period. In addition to the mythological heroes, occasionally some popular or historical and imaginary heroes also served as themes for these performances.

The common feature of these performances used to be conversation couched in verse. Their simple stage used to be open on all sides, and the musical instruments were also played on this very stage. The audience sat all round the stage, and the actors mostly used masks and primitive methods of make-up. The suitable season selected for such performances was usually the early winter season, just after the end of the rains. These performances used to commence shortly after sunset, and lasted till dawn. But they had not much of art in them, and like the three forms of drama discussed above, they also failed to flourish into full-fledged drama.

'Mysteries' and 'Moralities' of Europe

An attempt to sum up the above evidence regarding the varied modes of popular drama in medieval India may lead one to suggest a partial but real comparison with the medieval 'Mysteries' or Miracles' and 'Moralities' of Europe. Of course there are numerous apparent differences between the medieval drama of India and these 'Mysteries' and 'Moralities' of Europe, owing to the religious basis of both the races being entirely different. Thus, for instance, there could be no question in India of the rulers of the Church trying to stem the tide by forbidding the clergy to act in the churches, while the austere passion of Christ is altogether different from the romantic amours of Kṛṣṇa.

But once, however, the genius and the environments of the two people are allowed for, the two kinds of plays appear to have much in common. As in the medieval European drama, so also in India, there is no possibility of discovering a homogeneous entity, since a score of diverse elements went to the building up of the great 'Mystery' cycle. At the start there is a pure religious fervour; then a certain realism, even of a gross or farcical nature is introduced as well as the popular bombastic elements. A certain form of secular drama of social life develops out of both; and much of this entertainment is of an improvised character. Another common feature is the use of verse in both. The introduction of passages in Sanskrit in the one may be parelleled by the passages of Latin in the other. The dramatised stories

of Indian devotees may readily be likened to the Saints' plays of Western Europe, while the method of presentation by groups of amateurs provides still another bond between the two.

It may also be recalled that the Roman Catholic ceremonies from which the Western medieval drama developed have a counterpart in the orthodox Hindu temple worship. The Catholic church at Christmas resembles in many respects the Hindu Vaiṣṇava temple at the birth of Kṛṣṇa.

HINDI DRAMA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Chapter III

HINDI DRAMA BEFORE BHĀRATENDU.

From a chronological study of Sanskrit literature, one arrives at the conclusion that the regular chain of Sanskrit drama broke off with the advent of the Mohammadans in India. It is true that some solitary attempts continued to be made in this field even after the Muslim occupation of India, and some Sanskrit plays were written even in the Mughal period — and this solitary system cannot be said to have stopped even today — ~~and this~~ still, Sanskrit drama as a regular feature ceased to exist from the eleventh or twelfth century A.D.

And although the regular chain of Sanskrit drama broke off as early as the 11th or 12th century, the foundations of regular Hindi drama were laid as late as the middle of the ninteenth century, shortly before Bhāratendu. From Bhāratendu onwards drama became a regular feature in Hindi literature. In the opening chapter we have briefly noted the various factors responsible for this lack of drama during the interim period. At the same time we find that it was not all of a sudden that full fledged drama came into existence in the mid-ninteenth century. It was, obviously preceded by several earlier attempts at drama, which in fact paved the way for its final finished form.

Heredity, we know, has a great force. In Sanskrit literature, drama possessed the foremost position. So, inspite of the entire absence of dramatic taste during the interim period, several plays were written in Hindi as an outcome of its Sanskrit heredity. Hindi drama, much as it is indebted to Bengali drama and Western drama, owes its origin essentially and exclusively to Sanskrit drama. Sanskrit being so rich in drama, Hindi too, springing as it does from that language, could not rightly afford to be

entirely lacking in drama even in its early days of existence. Latest researches have revealed that certain plays were written in Hindi as early as the 14th century. But as they were not so much finished and artistic, they could not endear themselves to the public taste for long, with the result that with the lapse of time, most of these plays gradually passed into oblivion. Still, some early specimens of this nature are extant to the present day, while references about others are found in literature.

Characteristics of early Hindi Drama.

Before we proceed to discuss these early attempts in the field of drama, we need emphasise some of the common features of these plays. We have stated in the first Chapter that Hindi prose in its standard and systematic form (suitable to drama) is hardly a hundred years old. It did not exist during the period under discussion. Naturally these early plays are all written in verse.

Secondly, in this period, the 'Khari Boli' or the new standard form of Hindi language had not yet come into existence. As Sanskrit fell into disuse, Braja Bhāsā and Avadhi established themselves in its place. It was much later that 'Khari Boli' came in the field, and began to serve as a new medium of literature. So, the language of poetry of these plays is not 'Khari Boli', but Braja Bhāsā and Avadhi.

Thirdly, these plays do not at all obey the general rules of drama. They are dramas merely because their authors have called them by that name, or because they have employed dialogue as a means of the development of their plot. Excepting the presence of conversation, these works are wholly lacking in the essential characteristics of drama. In most of them even the entrances and exits of different characters are not given as in modern drama, although the names of the characters are written on one side; nor do they possess the grandeur of characterisation or the proper development of the plot.

Some early Hindi Plays.

The earliest specimens of these plays are 'Rukmini Harana'[1] and 'Pārijāta Harana'[2], written by the x famous poet Vidyā Pati[3] of Mithilā in the 14th century. Then, in the 17th century, Krsna-Jivana[4] wrote 'Karunābharana'[5]

1. रुक्मिणी हरण. 2. पारिजात-हरण. 3. विद्यापति. 4. कृष्ण-जीवन. 5. करुणाभरण.

which deals with Krsna's sports, and Hrdaya-rama[1] wrote 'Hanumāna Nāṭaka'[2]. The latter author is said to have written another play called 'Rukmini-Mangala'[3], but it is not extant.

'Prabodha-Candrodaya'[4] is a well-known Sanskrit drama, written by Krsna Misra[5]. It is an allegorical play in which Śraddha, Viveka, and Krodha etc. have been personified. This famous Sanskrit play has been translated into Hindi by several writers: the earliest attempt having been made by Yaśwanta Sinha[6], ruler of Jodhpur, who translated it in the middle of the 17th century. Although the translation is mostly in verse, the entrances and exits are given in prose, and a few prose lines are also scattered here and there.

The latest and perhaps the best translation of this famous play is that by Vrajavāsidāsa, a Vaiṣṇava of Vṛndāvana, belonging to the Vallabh sect. His translation (18th century) which is all in verse is a nice specimen of Hindi drama before Bhāratendu. It would not be out of place to quote a few lines from his translation, which will give us an idea of his language and poetry:

सरधा उवाच

सरधा कही अहै सुखदान । मन की दसा न परत बखान ॥
प्रवृत्ती नाम ताकी बर नार । मन को तासो अधिक पियार ॥
सो कोयाक बध सुनिकान । सुनत सनेह तजे तिन प्रान ॥
ताते मनहि सोक अधिकाय । चाहिय अब मनहुं मरि जाय ॥

भक्ति उवाच

होवै याते भलो पुनि कहा जु मन मरि जाय ।
सकल काज बिन श्रमहि मन तो सहजहि बन जाय ।
अरु मनहु बहु कष्ट ते छुट लहे निज रूप ।
लीन होय सुख ब्रह्म में जो सब भांति अनूप ॥

It has been stressed in these lines that peace and contentment can be attained only after the mind is killed, i.e. brought under control.

The next work is 'Śakuntalā'[7] of some poet 'Niwāja' who was a protege of Rājā Chatrasāla of Bundelkhand (Vik. 1706 - 91), and then of Prince Azam Shah (1710-64 Vik): he wrote this play at the instance of the latter.

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1. हृदयराम ; 2. हनुमान-नाटक ; 3. रुक्मिणी-मंगल ; 4. प्रबोध-चन्द्रोदय ; 5. कृष्ण-मिश्र ; 6. यशवन्त-सिंह ; [7.] शकुन्तला.

Another attempt of the 17th century is 'Deva-Māyā-prapanca Nāṭaka'[1], an allegorical play in six acts, written by Deva (other than the famous poet Deva of the Riti age). This drama is written under the influence of the Sanskrit allegorical drama, 'Prabodha-Candrodaya', and is a specimen of good poetry.

Then in the early ninteenth century, Hari Rāma wrote 'Jānaki-Rāma-Caritra Nāṭaka'[2]. It deals with the story of the marriage of Rama and Sita. Although the play is in verse, yet lines of 'Khari Boli' prose have been frequently interspersed, and the verse too bears a clear impression of 'Khari Boli'.

'Rāma-līlā Nāṭaka'[3] of Krsna Sharma again takes up the story of the marriage of Rama and Sita. It is written in mixed verse and prose, and its language is predominantly 'Khari Boli' of a very refined and polished nature. It gives no date of composition, but on the testimony of its language, which is regular 'Khari Boli', we can assign it to the ninteenth century.

Slightly better than these previous attempts, which can be easily dismissed as no drama at all, is 'Ānanda-Raghunandana Nāṭaka'[4] by Mahārāja Viśva-Nātha Sinha[5], which belongs to the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Like his father, Mahārāja Juya-Sinha, the author of this play was also a great lover of Art and literature. He is supposed to have written about thirty works in all, most of which deal with the life of Rama.

His 'Ānanda-Raghunandana-Nāṭaka', which is admitted by Bhāratendu as the first Hindi drama, is a play in seven acts. It deals with the history of Rama, from his birth to his coronation after return from exile. The play is not divided into scenes, and is thus influenced by the classical canons of dramaturgy.

As the play wright has tried to handle the entire unweildy story of the Ramayana, his work has not been a good success. The number of characters being overwhelming, characterisation is totally lacking. For the most part the author has used Braja Bhāṣā, but extracts in Sanskrit, Persian, Paiśāci, Marathi and even English have been occasionally introduced, just to parade author's knowledge of these languages. Otherwise the

1. देवमायाप्रपंच-नाटक; 2. जानकीरामचरित-नाटक; 3. रामलीला-नाटक; 4. आनन्दरघुनन्दन-नाटक

use of all these languages is queer and in some cases even anachronistic.

If compared with earlier works, this attempt at drama cannot be called bad, but if judged by the essential elements of regular drama, this composition appears entirely undramatic and useless.

As we have already said, all these works are totally lacking in essential elements of drama. At best they are versified conversations, dealing mostly with the episodes of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. They display neither any skill of characterisation, nor is their plot properly knit together. They are worthless for the stage, and they can be better styled as Kāvyas than dramas.

The Rise of Regular Hindi Drama: Its Causes.

So far only stray attempts had been made in the field of drama by various writers from time to time. Hereafter, from 1859, a regular chain of drama in Hindi began, and it has continued to the present day with remarkable progress. The factors that were responsible for this rise of regular Hindi drama make an interesting study. As we have said before, it were not the Rasa-lila, Rama-lila or similar other forms that led to the rise of Hindi drama. These performances were no doubt medieval forms of Hindi drama but they maintained an independent status, and did, in no way, lead to our regular Hindi drama, which rose entirely independent of these medieval forms.

Firstly the peace and lull that followed the British occupation of India greatly paved the way for drama. Moreover, during the latter half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries, the Europeans opened many dramatic clubs and theatres in big cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Patna for their entertainment. In these theatres they used to stage either some English plays or the translation of Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā. This gave an impetus to the indigenous talent.

At this very time the Western scholars commenced a careful and thorough study of Sanskrit literature. They introduced it for the first time in England and other European countries, and translated well-known Sanskrit plays and epics in English, German, French and other languages of the West. Sir William Jones was a great lover of Sanskrit, who could not resist the charm of translating the immortal play of Kālidāsa. Again, Goethe the great German poet and philosopher, praised this drama (although he read it only in translation) in memorable words.

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This sudden and great interest of Western scholars in Sanskrit literature directed the attention and genius of our literary men also to that language and its literature. With the introduction of the lithographic press in India in the beginning of the nimteenth century, books began to be published rapidly, and they were now available at much cheaper rates. Our scholars now sought to publish the translations of leading Sanskrit works. But alongside of their active interest in the Sanskrit literature, they devoted themselves also to the study of Western languages and literature. Striking similarities, in certain aspects, between the classical Sanskrit drama and the Elizabethan drama gave another incentive to the rise of Hindi drama. Shakespeare and his contemporaries began to be studied with interest. Moreover, drama itself was not a new thing for the Indians, although its chain was broken for some centuries in the middle. With the spread of education and advancement of learning, people experienced a mental development, and they began to feel the need of drama very essential for the develop-ment of culture.

In short, although in the latter half of the nimteenth century, Indian life maintained much of its ancient Indian tradition, yet it received a direct influence of the culture of the West. Hindi scholars who shared this influence equally with or even more than others, introduced it in their own literature. Of these progressive writers who took the forward stride with the time, the name of Gopāla Candra alias Giridhara dāsa[1] (1833-60) deserves special mention. He was a great scholar of Hindi and Sanskrit and a man of progressive views. In him we find the first great genius of Hindi drama, who started the tradition of regular Hindi drama.

According to Bharatendu he wrote about forty works, of which 'Nahusa Nātaka'[2] is the only play. Composed in 1859, this is the first Hindi drama, which, although mostly in verse, abides by the essential rules of drama. It is a mythological drama, dealing with the story of India and Vrtra and the ultimate death of the latter. Unfortunately this valuable first drama of Hindi language is not available in full. Its full manuscript, it is said, was lost while in the possession of some publisher. The fragment that is extant was published by Rādhā-Krsna-dāsa[3] in the 'Nāgarī Pracārinī Patrikā'[4] in 1905.

१. गोपालचन्द्र उपनाम गिरिधरदास, २. नहुष-नाटक; ३. राधाकृष्णदास, ४. नागरी-प्रचारिणी-पत्रिका

'Mahusa Nātaka' is written entirely on classical lines. The verse, which covers some three-fourth of the play, displays a rich variety of metres. The language of both verse and prose is Braja Bhāṣā, and the drama is a nicely written piece of art.

The great appreciation of Sanskrit literature by Western scholars diverted the Indian talent also to the study of that literature. Sanskrit dramas and epics began to receive more and more attention of our learned man, and as a result, in 1861 appeared Raja Laksmana Sinha's[1] beautiful translation of the 'Sakuntala'. Originally this translation was all in prose; even Sanskrit verses were rendered into prose. A few years later the author got it reprinted, substituting verse in place of Sanskrit verse and prose for original prose. Today, this mixed prose-verse version of the translation is very popular, and it has been prescribed by several Universities for different examinations.

The prose of this translation is regular 'Khari Boli', while the verse is in Braja Bhasa. The translation evidences to the author's perfect control over the language, and his poetic skill. The sense and force of the original is retained faithfully in the translation, and it is no less interesting than the original. Persian words have been carefully avoided in the whole of the translation. It would be appropriate to quote a short extract from this translation:

अनसूया — (हौले प्रियंवदा से) सखी, मैं भी इसी सोच-विचार में हूँ। अब इससे पूछूंगी। (प्रकट) महात्मा, तुम्हारे मधुर वचनों के विश्वास में आकर मेरा जी यह पूछने को चाहता है कि तुम किस राजवंश के भूषण हो? और किस देश की प्रजा को विरह में व्याकुल छोड़ यहां पधारे हो? क्या कारण है, जिससे तुमने अपने कोमल गात को इस कठिन तपोवन में आकर पीड़ित किया है। . . . . (Act 1).

Devīdatta[2], a profound scholar of Sanskrit and Professor at Barielly College translated Bhavabhuti's 'Uttara-rāma-carita'[3]. The translation was completed in 1871 and was published a couple of years later from Calcutta. This translation, though not bad, lacks the charm and life which are characteristic of Raja Laksmana Sinha's translation. And, as the translator was not a poet, the original verse too has been translated in prose.

1. राजा लक्ष्मण सिंह, 2. देवीदत्त ; 3. उत्तररामचरित.

Apart from those dramas which followed the classical canons of dramaturgy and which rose as a result of Sanskrit heredity, another type of drama also developed side by side. This other kind of drama aimed more at entertainment than any rules of dramaturgy or artistic perfection. The first drama of this kind was 'Inder Sabha'[1], which was written by Munshi Amanat Khan, and was played in 1853 at the court of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Avadh.

'Inder Sabha' is an opera, and two-third of its bulk consists of songs. The remaining one-third, which consists of conversations, is again in verse. When the characters appear on the stage, they first introduce themselves to the audience. For example, Indra in his own court announces himself in the following manner.

राजा हूं मैं क़ौम का और इन्दर मेरा नाम।
बिन परियों के दीद के मुझे नहीं आराम। etc.

Another nymph introduces herself in the following way:-

गाती हूं मैं और नाच सदा काम है मेरा।
आफ़ाक़ में पुखराज परी नाम है मेरा। and so on.

In the same way other characters also introduce themselves as they make their first appearance on the stage.

Much for the melody of its frequent songs, 'Inder Sabha' became very popular with the masses. But before any other play of the pattern of 'Inder Sabha' could have been written at the said court, the rule of the Nawabs of Avadh came to an end in 1856. 'Inder Sabha' remained popular for half a century, and the Parsi Theatrical Companies often staged this play for many years to follow. Even as late as the closing years of the ninteenth century, whenever 'Inder Sabha' was played, huge rush of spectators flocked to the scene.

Some other writers tried to carry on the tradition of Amanat Khan, and produced works of a similar nature like 'Bandar Sabha'[2] and 'Machandar Sabha'[3] but their works could not appeal to the public mind.

The tradition of this drama which aimed merely at entertainment, and of which 'Inder Sabha' was the earliest and the most popular example, was now carried on by the professional Parsi Theatrical Companies. In circa 1870

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1. इन्दर-सभा; 2. बन्दर-सभा; 3. मछन्दर-सभा

'The Original Theatrical Company' was started, and it was rapidly followed by several other Companies of that nature, like the 'Victoria Natak Company', and the 'Alfred Theatrical Company.' While these companies never tried to give the audience any excellent play, or to mould the taste of the public, they were very careful in catering to the low taste of masses. They provided maximum entertainment to the audience by giving them whatever they liked, may it be of a very vulgar and impolished nature.

But these very Theatrical Companies gave us a very useful thing too — a thing that we needed most, i.e. the stage. Rasa-lila and 'Nautankis' had a stage no doubt, but their stage was of a very simple, domestic and un-scientific nature. These Companies, on the other hand, gave us a scientific stage, which was an Indian appropriation of Elizabethan stage.

Usually, every theatrical company had a play-wright of its own, who used to be a good actor as well and participated in the performances of plays. Being, therefore, quite familiar with the requirements of the stage, these playwrights always wrote such things as could be easily represented on the stage.

But the greatest drawback in these theatrical companies was that, their aim being nothing more than making money, their taste was always cheap, inartistic and even vulgar. They cared to give the public only what they (the public) liked most. Naturally, the real dramatic art was totally lacking in their works. It was this lack of art and the rush of vulgarity and cheap entertainment of these theatres that shocked Bhāratendu Hariścandra who resolved to revive the old tradition of literary drama.

Chapter IV. BHĀRATENDU HARIŚ-CANDRA.

Bhāratendu Hariś-candra , the father of Hindi drama, was born at Banaras on Monday, the 9th September 1850. His mother died when he was a child of five, and while he was less than eleven years, his father also left for his heavenly abode. But although Bhāratendu was only moderately educated, his exceptional genius, extraordinary talents and keen observation enabled him to produce memorable works of literature. He was born in an age when a conflict was going on between the ancient and the modern schools of thought. While there were people who ridiculed everything that was old and Indian, there were others who were determined against all that was modern and Western. The baffling problems of the day were to find out as to which form of Hindi language and literature would be acceptable to all, and how to make Hindi literature as rich and advanced as the Bengali literature. At this critical time, which badly needed the guidance and support of a true genius, rose Bhāratendu. He quickly surveyed the whole situation and devoted himself, body and soul, to the task. In literature and art he introduced a healthy combination of the ancient and the modern, the Indian and the alien, as we shall show later. And once he opened the blocked avenue of Hindi literature, dozens of his contemporaries and successors jumped out to follow in his footsteps, and to carry on the literary traditions established by him.

Bhāratendu rendered memorable service in all the branches of Hindi literature. But he noticed, with sad surprise, that Hindi literature was totally lacking in real drama. He had witnessed the rise of drama in Bengal, and had also studied Sanskrit and English drama. So, with firm resolve and by dint of his great genius, hard work and literary taste, he sought to bring Hindi drama on a new road of life.

Plays of Bhāratendu. In all Bhāratendu wrote eighteen plays. Of these, one

'Pravāsa Nāṭaka'[1] was left incomplete, and even the fragment is not available today. He translated five plays from Sanskrit one from Bengali, one from English, and wrote ten original plays. His career as a dramatist begins from 1868, in which year he wrote 'Vidyā-Sundara'[2] 'Ratnāvalī'[3] and 'Pravāsa' Thereafter we find a gap of four years, and no play is known to have been written during this period. In 1872 he wrote 'Pākhaṇḍa- Viḍambana'[4]; in 1873 he finished 'Vaidiki Himsā, Himsā na Bhavati'[5] and 'Dhanañjaya Vijaya'[6] in 1874 he wrote 'Prema-Yoginī'[7] and in 1875 appeared his 'Satya-Hariścandra'[8] and the translation of 'Mudrā-Rākṣasa'[9]. Next year, that is in 1876 he wrote four plays, namely 'Karpūra- Mañjarī'[10] 'Viṣasya Viṣam Auṣadham'[11] 'Candrāvalī'[12] and 'Bhārata-Durdaśā'[13]. In the next three years he produced no drama, except revising the translation of 'Bhārata Jananī'[14]. In 1880 he produced 'Nīla Devī'[15] and translated 'Merchant of Venice' under the title 'Durlabha Bandhu'[16]. In 1881 he wrote 'Andhera Nagarī'[17] afarce and in his last year (i.e. 1884) he wrote his 'Satī Pratāpa'[18], which he left incomplete. The same year he completed his 'Nāṭaka Nibandha'[19], which is an essay on drama. Bharatendu passed away on 6th January 1885.

A glance over the chronological range of Bhāratendu's plays shows that he was a man of free will and easy habits. He would not write plays just for the sake of writing them. Rather it was after his own sweet will and inspiration that he produced these plays, and that is the reason why most of them are extremely beautiful and much above the level of his contemporary writers. Sometimes he would finish four plays in one year, while at others he may spend four years without undertaking any such enterprise. At the same time he was, however, busy with the task of writing beautiful poetry and prose also in Hindi.

Bhāratendu's plays can be divided under two heads --(i)original plays and (ii)translations. We shall discuss his original plays later,as they are more in number and importance. First we shall deal with translations.

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1. प्रवास नाटक; 2. विद्यासुन्दर; 3. रत्नावली; 4. पाखण्ड विडम्बन; 5. वैदिकी हिंसा हिंसा न भवति, 6. धनञ्जय विजय; 7. प्रेम-योगिनी; 8. सत्य हरिश्चन्द्र; 9. मुद्रा राक्षस; 10. कर्पूर-मंजरी, 11. विषस्य विषमौषधम्; 12. चन्द्रावली; 13. भारत-दुर्दशा; 14. भारत-जननी; 15. नील देवी; 16. दुर्लभ-बन्धु; 17. अन्धेर-नगरी; 18. सती प्रताप; 19. नाटक निबन्ध

anslations   It was with 'Pravāsa Nāṭaka' that in 1868 Bharatendu began his career as a playwright. But overtaken by the beauty of Harṣa's Ratnāvalī, he left 'Pravāsa' unfinished and took up the task of translating 'Ratnāvalī' According to Bhāratendu, Ratnāvalī is, next to Kālidāsa's 'Śakuntalā,' the most interesting Sanskrit drama. He writes in the introduction—

"शकुन्तला के सिवाय और सब नाटकों में रत्नावली नाटिका बहुत अच्छी और पढ़ने वालों को आनन्द देने वाली है इस हेतु से मैंने पहले इसी नाटिका का तर्जुमा किया है और जो ईश्वरेच्छा अनुकूल है और आप गुणग्राहकों की अनुग्रहदृष्टि है तो धीरे धीरे कुछ नाटकों का तर्जुमा कर प्रकाशित होता जायगा।"

Although those words of Bharatendu imply that he translated the play in full, yet only a small fragment of it, consisting of the 'Nāndī,' 'Prastāvanā' and 'Viṣkambhaka,' is available.

The same year Bharatendu wrote his 'Vidyā-Sundara', which is based on Sanskrit 'Caura-pañcāśikā'[1] of 'Caura Kavi'[2]. This play is complete in three acts, each having 4, 3 and 3 scenes respectively. The story of Vidya-Sundara was very popular in Bengal, from where Bharatendu took the theme of his translation. The play deals with a very interesting story of the love and secret marriage of Vidyā, princess of Vardhamāna, and Sundara, prince of Kāñcipura. There is no Prastāvanā to this play, nor are the verses very frequent here.

In 1872, Bharatendu translated the third act of Kṛṣṇa Miśra's famous 'Prabodha Candrodaya' and named it as 'Pākhaṇḍa Viḍambana', Karuṇā, Śānti and Śraddhā are main personified characters in this play, in which the superiority of Vaiṣṇavism is sought to be established. Its language shows signs of maturity than of 'Vidya-Sundara', and the verses too are more frequent in this work.

In 1873 appeared Bharatendu's translation of 'Dhanañjaya-Vijaya', a Vyāyoga written in Sanskrit by Kāñcana Kavi. The play deals with the battle of Arjuna with the Kauravas on the last day of their exile incognito and the victory of the former. It is further decided, when Pāṇḍavas disclose their identity, to offer the hand of Uttarā in marriage to Abhimanyu. In this play there is more verse than prose, and the translation on the whole is quite satisfactory.

1. चौर पञ्चाशिका. 2. चौर कवि.

Translations It was with 'Pravāsa Nāṭaka' that in 1868 Bharatendu began his career as a playwright. But overtaken by the beauty of Harṣa's Ratnāvalī, he left 'Pravāsa' unfinished and took up the task of translating 'Ratnāvalī'. According to Bharatendu, Ratnāvalī is, next to Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā, the most interesting Sanskrit drama. He writes in the introduction—

"शकुन्तला के सिवाय और सब नाटकों में रत्नावली नाटिका बहुत अच्छी
और पढ़ने वालों को आनन्द देने वाली है इस हेतु मैंने पहले इसी नाटिका का
[illegible]
[illegible]"

Although these words of Bharatendu imply that he completed the play in full, yet only a small fragment of it, consisting of the Nāndī, Prastāvanā and Viṣkambhaka, is available.

The same year Bharatendu wrote his 'Vidyā-sundara', which is based on Sanskrit 'Caura-pañcāśikā'[1] or 'Caura Kavi'[2]. This play is complete in three acts, each having 4, 2 and 3 scenes respectively. The story of Vidyā-sundara was very popular in Bengal. From there Bharatendu took the theme of his translation. The play deals with a very interesting story of the love and secret marriage of Vidyā, daughter of Vīrasiṃha, and Sundara, prince of Kāñcīpura. There is no resemblance to this play, nor are the verses very frequent here.

In 1872, Bharatendu translated the third act of Kṛṣṇa Miśra's famous 'Prabodha Candrodaya' and named it as 'Pākhaṇḍa Viḍambana'. Bauddha, Jaina and Brāhmaṇa are main significant characters in this play, in which the superiority of Vaiṣṇavism is sought to be established. The language shows signs of maturity than of 'Vidyā-sundara', and the verses too are more frequent in this work.

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[illegible]

After completing 'Satya-Hariś-candra', Bharatendu translated Mudrā-Rākṣasa of Viśākhadatta. Being the only play of its kind in Sanskrit literature, the Mudrā-Rākṣasa has its own place and worth. Bharatendu has translated this difficult and lengthy Sanskrit drama with great success. It greatly retains the charm and force of the original, and read independently, it appears to be an original composition. Bharatendu has made some minor additions and alterations here and there, but these do not effect the play in any way. In the introduction the translator has given the historical background of the play. The translation is very lucid, and the verse is as lively as the prose:-

चाणक्य — भला अमात्य! आपने यह कहां से निकाला कि हम योग्य हैं और आप अयोग्य हैं? क्योंकि देखिये —

रहत लगामहिं कसे अश्व की पीठ न छोड़त।
खान पान असनान भोग तजि मुख नाहिं मोड़त॥
छूटे सब सुख-साज नींद नाहिं आवत नयननं।
निसि दिन चौंकत रहत वीर सब भय धरि निज मन॥
वह हौदन सों सब कन कस्यौं नृप-गजगन अवरेखिये।
रिपुदर्प-दूरकर अतिप्रबल निज महातमबल देखिये॥ (Act VII).

'Karpūru- Mañjarī' is the only play of its kind in Sanskrit literature. It is a saṭṭaka, that is, all written in Prakrit. It is a love-drama, rich in humour as well. Bharatendu's translation of the play is very beautiful, though not very faithful to the original.

In 1880 Bharatendu translated Shakespeare's 'Merchant of Venice' under the title 'Durlabha Bandhu'. The translation is incomplete though not bad. The translator has changed the English names into appropriate Hindi names; for example he has changed Antonio into Ananta, Basanio into Basant and Portia into Puraśrī. Similarly he has changed the Christians and Jews to Hindus and Jains respectively. (This play has been further discussed in Chapter III under the sub-heading 'Translations').

Having finished with the translations, we come to the original plays of Bharatendu. They are ten in number, and can be divided into four different classes, namely (i) Mythological Plays; (ii) Social and socio-political plays, (iii) Historical plays, and (iv) Farces and Satires.

After completing 'Satya-Harish-chandra', Bharatendu translated Mudrā-Rākshasa of Viśākhadatta. Being the only play of its kind in Sanskrit literature, the Mudrā-Rākshasa has its own place and worth. Bharatendu has translated this difficult and lengthy Sanskrit drama with great success. It greatly retains the charm and force of the original, and read independently, it appears to be an original composition. Bharatendu has made some minor additions and alterations here and there, but these do not affect the play in any way. In the introduction the translator has given the historical background of the play. The translation is very lucid, and the verse is as lively as the prose:-

चाणक्य — [illegible]

और आप अभिमत हैं? स्वीकार कीजिए —

[illegible]

[illegible] (Act VII).

'Karpūra-mañjarī' is the only play of its kind in Sanskrit literature. It is a saṭṭaka, that is, all written in Prakrit. It is a love-drama, rich in humour or wit. Bharatendu's translation of the play is very beautiful, though not very faithful to the original.

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Having finished with the translations, we come to the original plays of Bharatendu. They are ten in number, and can be divided into four different classes, namely (i) mythological plays, (ii) social and socio-political plays, (iii) [illegible] plays, and (iv) [illegible].

'Satya-Hariścandra', which is one of the best plays of Bharatendu, is the first original attempt at mythological drama. It is based on a Puranic story, but Kṣemīśvara's 'Caṇḍa-Kauśika' has also served as a source. The innovations introduced by the playwright add to the beauty and force of the play. It is meant for young students and has been prescribed by different Universities for various examinations. In this play, Bharatendu has portrayed the eternal conflict between the ideal of truth and the attempt to overthrow it. Hariścandra, the hero of the play, represents the ideal of truth. In order to uphold this ideal, he abandons his throne and comforts, undergoes a life of hard ordeal, and in the end comes out triumphant. Viśvāmitra, who is responsible for King's ordeal, is certainly not the devil of the piece. He is the devil, who is in fact angel in disguise, as he restores everything to the right recipient, after chastening the latter through a hard series of trials.

The characters in this play are not invested with any human motive; they symbolise the ideal of truth on the one hand and the attempt to overthrow it on the other. The play, with its careful absence of the erotic element, provides the young readers with a nice theme to improve their morals. The play begins with the Nāndī, and gives the Prastāvanā too before the first act begins. In this way it follows the tradition of classical drama. But, contrary to the rules of Sanskrit dramaturgy, it has only four acts, which might be due to western influence.

The construction of the plot is loose and the characterization is meagre. But the play significantly represents the romantic tendency in drama as illustrated in its poetical description of rivers, women and palaces. The shower of flowers from heaven and the floating of aerial cars thrill the imagination and invest the play with a spirit of romance.

'Śrī Candrāvalī' is another attempt at mythological drama, and is again one of the masterpieces of Bharatendu. The erotic sentiment dominates the play, which illustrates all the stages of separation (Viyoga) leading to the ultimate union. The plot of the play is woven round a woman pining for the love of her Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the romantic character of mythology being the object of her love. But her love is strictly spiritual and not worldly, as the author writes in the introduction:

" इसमें तुम्हारे उस प्रेम का वर्णन है, इसका नहीं जो संसार में प्रचलित है। "

The Lord represents for the author the ultimate principle of spiritual love which sustains the universe and upholds it. The heroine, Candrāvalī, symbolises the eternal yearning of man to realize this ideal.

Although a sublime principle forms the theme of the play, yet it is not a great success as a piece of dramatic literature. The inordinate length of speeches, though simple and not boring, destroys the dramatic illusion. Like his other plays, in Sri Candravali also the playwright has followed neither the classical canons of dramaturgy nor the principles of Western dramatic technique. In addition to the combination of these, the play displays an influence of the Rasa-lila as well. Inspite of its flaws, this play has been very popular among orthodox people having a devotional bent of mind. It has been translated into Sanskrit and Braja Bhāṣā.

The next mythological drama of Bharatendu is 'Satī Pratāpa', It is the last play of Bharatendu, left incomplete by him in four scenes. In 1892 Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-dāsa completed this play by adding three more scenes to it. The play deals with the ideal love of Sāvitrī and Satya-Vāna, and the glorious conquest of true love over death. The play is especially useful for ladies, for whom Sāvitrī stands as an embodiment of faithfulness, virtue and true love.

Next we come to plays in which Bharatendu has dealt with social or socio-political problems. The most important play of this kind is 'Bharata-Durdaśā'[1]. After describing the glory and greatness of ancient India in forceful language, the play-wright has presented, by way of contrast, a very gloomy picture of the country today. The author has given a tragic ending to the play in order to arouse patriotic passion in the hearts of Indians whom he wants to liberate the country from the clutches of foreign domination.

The very opening of the play is very impressive and forceful:

रोअहु सब मिलिकै आवहु भारत भाई।
हा हा! भारत दुर्दशा न देखी जाई।।

~~1. The play consists of ten acts and not of six as wrongly stated by Dr. Som Nath Gupta in his [illegible] Page 86.~~

सब से पहिले जेहि ईश्वर धनबल दीनो।
सब से पहिले जेहि सभ्य विधाता कीनो॥
सब से पहिले जो रूप-रंग-रस-भीनो।
सब से पहिले विद्याफल जिन गहि लीनो॥
अब सबके पीछे सोई परत लखाई।
हा हा! भारतदुर्दशा न देखी जाई॥ etc.

In the fourth act the author enumerates, in the form of symbolic characters, all the ills which the country suffers from. Among these are disease, indolence, drinking, ignorance and poverty. The play of a very ordinary length has been divided into as many as ten acts[1], which are not further divided into scenes. This play too suffers from the disadvantage of many lengthy speeches. A few forceful speeches in verse have been inserted here and there for the purpose of recitation and of sermonising to the audience.

In 1880 Bharatendu wrote 'Bhārata Janani' for which the Bengali 'Bhārata-Mātā' served as a source. It is said that this play was in fact originally written by a friend of Bharatendu, and was submitted to him for revision. The play was so poor that, while revising it, Bharatendu totally overhauled it, adding a lot from his own. Thus the play, being mainly the attempt of Bharatendu himself, passed under his name.

This play also describes the deplorable condition of the country due to mutual jealousy and conflicts of the Indians. In the end an impassioned appeal is made for patriotism and unity.

धैर्य....... हे भ्रातृगण! अब उठो और जननी के दुःख के निर्वाण का प्रयत्न करो। अभिमान, लोभ, अपमान, आत्मसमाज-प्रशंसा, परजाति-निन्दा, इन सब का सावधानपूर्वक परित्याग करो, धैर्य का अवलम्बन करो, सब कोई धैर्य को धारण करो, भाई अवश्य तुम लोगों की कांक्षा पूरी होगी। etc.

In the manner of Bharata-Vākya, 'Bhārata-Mātā' prays to God for reviving the old glory and prosperity of the country—

भारतमाता—.....(हाथ जोड़कर) हे जगदीश्वर! तू सर्वशक्तिमान है, तुझ को कोई बात दुर्घट नहीं, अब मुझ अबला पर दया करके मेरे दुःख निवारण कर और मेरी इस प्रार्थना को अंगीकार कर
बल कला कौशल अमित विद्या वत्स मेरे नित लहैं।
पुनि हृदय-ज्ञान-प्रकाश ते अज्ञान-तम तुरतहि दहैं।
ताजि द्वेष ईर्ष्या द्रोह निंदा देश-उन्नति सब चहैं।
अभिलाख यह जिय पूर्ववत धन धान्य मोहि सबहि कहैं॥

'Bhārata-Janani' is a brief opera, and has been staged several times.

'Prema-Yogini' another short play, is incomplete and has four scenes

1. The play consists of ten acts and not of six as wrongly stated by Dr. Som Nath Gupta in his Hindi Nataka Sahitya Ka Itihasa (1948) Page 68.

only. It gives a real picture of Banaras of Bharatendu's times, and deals with the aristocratic class of that city. It also bears some reflection of author's own life. This fragment of the play anticipates that the work, if completed, would have been no mean enterprise of Bharatendu.

'Nīladevī' is the only historical play written by Bharatendu. Abdul Sharif Khan defeats a Kshatriya prince and arrests him. Nīladevī, the wife of the defeated prince, penetrates into the enemy's camp in the guise of a dancing girl to recover her husband's body and to take revenge. The Muslim chief is infatuated by her beauty and art, and while he is in a state of intoxication, Nīladevī puts him to death and saves her honour.

In Hindi literature, 'Nīladevī' is the earliest attempt at historical drama, and as such it is an admirable attempt of Bharatendu. The comic is successfully blended with the heroic and the pathetic. The play can be represented well on the stage, and can inspire the audience with the sentiment of patriotism and heroism.

Bharatendu's aim in writing this play is summed up in his own words-

" इससे यह शंका किसी को न हो कि मैं स्वप्न में भी यह इच्छा करता हूँ कि इन गौरांगी युवती-समूह की भांति हमारी कुललक्ष्मी-गण भी लज्जा को तिलांजलि देकर अपने पति के साथ घूमें; किन्तु और बातों में जिस भांति अंग्रेजी स्त्रियां सावधान होती हैं, पढ़ी लिखी होती हैं, घर का काम-काज संभालती हैं, अपने संतानगण को शिक्षा देती हैं, अपना स्वत्व पहचानती हैं, अपनी जाति और अपने देश की सम्पत्ति-विपत्ति को समझती हैं, उसमें सहायता देती हैं, और इतने समुन्नत मनुष्य जीवन को व्यर्थ गृहदास्य और कलह ही में नहीं खोतीं, उसी भांति हमारी गृहदेवता भी वर्तमान हीनावस्था को उल्लंघन करके कुछ उन्नति प्राप्त करें, यही लालसा है।

Faruces and satires of Bharatendu.

Now we are left with the farces and satires of Bharatendu. In 1873, at the age of 23, Bharatendu wrote his first farce 'Vaidikī Himsā Himsā Na Bhavati', which is obviously the first farce of Hindi literature. In this play the author has ridiculed those so-called progressive persons who take meat and wine and advocate the cause of widow-remarriage. At one place he remarks that a person who has a nodding acquaintance of the English language and has married a Muslim wife considers himself a 'free' person. It is said that this remark was prompted by a desire to wreak personal vengeance on one

of his opponents. At the same time it can be a clear indication of the spirit of that age.

The play is entirely an original product of Bharatendu. It contains many quotations from scriptures which are mostly criticised.

In 1875-76 Bharatendu wrote his next satire, viz.'Viṣasya Viṣam Auṣadham'. In 1875, Malhar Rao, the Gaekwar ruler of Baroda was deposed on account of his inefficient rule, and Sayaji Rao was installed in his place. This incident served as the theme of this play, in which the author has drawn a contrast between the government of petty states and the efficient central administration of the British in India. The playwright rejoices over the dismissal of the misgoverning chief, and has enlogized English rule. The play was written with a view to extending advice to other rulers to mend their ways.

It is a monodrama, in which Bhaṇḍācārya is the only character who goes on speaking throughout the play. The play closes with the following 'Bharata Vākya' —

परतिय परधन देखि न नृपगन चित्त चलावें।
गाय दूध बहु देहिं, मेघ सुभ जल बरसावें॥
हरि-पद में रति होई, न दुख कोउ कहं व्यापै।
अंगरेजन को राज ईस इत थिर करि थापै॥
श्रुति-पंथ-चलैं सज्जन सबै सुखी होंहिं तजि दुष्ट-भय।
कविबाणी थिर रस सों रहै भारत को नित होई जय॥

'Andhera Nagarī' is another minor force of Bharatendu, published in 1881. The play comments on the evils of greed and avarices and pleads the necessity of discrimination between the good and the bad. In a satrical way the playwright criticises several evils which were prevalent in the country at that time.

The play is not free from ~~certain~~ defects. In it, the character of the king is not only inconsistent, but also highly improbable. The play is interspersed with ethical reflections and general comments on the sad plight of the country.

Although Bharatendu's farces do not possess much artistic or literary merit, yet they are significant for purposes of critical research and historical investigation.

Art and Technique of Bharatendu

There is much truth in the rule that in order to be a good playwright, one must be a successful actor, or failing that, must be fully conversant with the rules of dramaturgy. How can one rightly understand the needs and difficulties of the stage without being an actor or director himself. The example of Bharatendu greatly amplifies this statement. Bharatendu was himself a first-rate actor and he participated in the performance of his plays with great zeal and interest. At the same time he personally directed them. As a result of all this we find that Bharatendu's plays suffer from no handicaps of the stage and can be played with remarkable success.

Still we hear that the plays of Bharatendu are not very fine works of art. They lack the touch of a Kalidasa or a Shakespeare. And to a certain extent this is true. But we have also to remember that even today, almost a century after that reputed writer, we find very few plays of the genius of Shakespeare or Kalidasa in Hindi literature. So long as Hindi lacks its own independent stage, it is useless to hope for many plays of outstanding worth.

Moreover, Bharatendu had to work under so many handicaps. He had no precedents before him which he would improve upon. His path was entirely untrodden, and he was the first scholar to make the way and set foot on it. It is more convenient to critise than to create. The task before Bharatendu was not only to lay the foundations of Hindi drama, but also to set a standard of the same. At the same time he was to establish a Hindi stage, because he had realised that it was the absence of stage that was really standing in the way of the progress of Hindi drama.

An all-round genius that Bharatendu was, he devoted himself to all the branches of Hindi literature that needed his feeding and support. He established the Hindi stage, which was unfortunately thrown into disuse soon after his early and untimely demise. He took active part in the performance of plays in order to infuse life into Hindi stage, which was so essential for the popularity and progress of drama. Not only he produced original plays, of different types (e.g. mythological, social, historical and farces etc.) but also translated interesting plays from other languages. And in all his plays he always took a special care to make them suited to stage requirements.

Bharatendu started his dramatic career with a firm resolve to introduce genuine dramatic art and taste in Hindi. He was well aware of the vulgar and uncultured taste of the people of his times. Once he went to a Parsi theatre where 'Sakuntala' was to be staged that night. The performance was obviously to be based on the immortal play of Kalidasa. But when he saw Sakuntala, the heroine of the piece, dancing with one hand on her head and the other hanging down, and singing पतली कमर बल खाये in the manner of an uncultured rustic girl, his heart was filled with disgust. Truly art loving as he was, he was shocked at the cheap, inartistic get up of that Parsi adoptation of splendid 'Sakuntala'. Instantaneously he decided to revive the true classical art of drama. He closely studied Sanskrit treatise on dramaturgy, and worked hard for the rest of his life for that revival.

But it was not blindly that Bharatendu followed the traditions and ideals of classical literature. The canons of classical dramaturgy are so complicated and strict, that they leave no room for original alterations by any gifted writer. Moreover no man, of high or low calibre, can escape the influence of contemporary traditions and trends. Consequently, Bharatendu, as also his contemporaries, adopted a via media between the classical and the Western technique. For instance, if Bharatendu's 'Śrī Candrāvalī' clearly follows the injunctions of 'Daśa Rūpaka' it also bears an obvious impression of 'Rasa-lila'. Similarly, his 'Bhārata-Jananī' betrays a strong influence of opera on it. His farces, too, are not altogether free from the influence of the Parsi Theatre. It is true that in certain cases this combination of the classical, Parsi and Bengali features of drama has resulted in inorganic construction, incoherent characterisation, disharmony and cheap entertainment. But if we read these plays in the spirit of those times, making full allowance for the different handicaps under which Bharatendu worked, they will appear to us as works of great genius and ample skill.

According to the Indian (Classical) rules of dramaturgy, there are three chief elements in drama, i.e. the plot, the hero (or broadly speaking characterisation of leading dramatis personae) and sentiment. The plot means that form of the story and action which has been given to the play by the genius of the playwright, and not the original story of its source. If the author has displayed sufficient skill in handling and remodelling it, the result is bound to be a glorious success. Characterisation gives force

to the play, and sometimes reflects the personality of the author to a certain extent. If the characters possess individuality of their own, and talk and act in accordance with the situation, they are sufficient proof of the genius of the author. The sentiment verily infuses life into the play, without which the work may remain cold, lifeless and dull.

ot construction. In plot construction, Bharatendu has been quite successful. In Satya-Hariś-candra, the innovations made by the dramatist elevate the plot of the play. The conversation between Indra and Nārada can serve as advice to youngmen. The idea of the sage's cursing, without reason, the noble king given to the righteous task of helping the needy, did not appeal to the sensible playwright. So he invented the design of the dream, in course of which the king makes over his kingdom to a Brahmana; the conversation between the king and his faithful wife just after the dream exalts the character of both. The playwright has tried to make his hero an ideal figure, but free, at the same time, from the inconsistencies and abnormalities of the original story. The pathos of the play is also more deep and touching than in the original.

The plot of 'Śrī Candrāvalī' centres round love, separation and union, and in this order it is very compactly built up. There is, of course, no variety of action, as the play deals only with love, its emotions and thrills, its abstacles and fruition. Anyhow this lack of variety does not lead to monotony and the play has a very devotional effect on the minds of the spectators.

The plot of 'Nīladevī' has been made more interesting and useful with the scheme of queen's revenge. When Nīladevī applies fraud in order to wreak vengeance upon her deceitful enemy and uses the same instrument of treachery against her enemy which had been used by him against her husband, she not only saves her honour and penalises the enemy, but also, in a way, exhorts the Indian woman to weild the arms and tact in order to deal properly with the enemies of the mother-land. The play elevates the ideal of womanhood, and teaches the weaker sex how to work with the pluck of a self respect-ing and revengeful lady.

'Bhārata-Durdaśā' is an original product of the author's mind; He

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The plot of 'Śrī Gandharvī' centres round love, separation and union and in this order it is very correctly built up. There is, of course, no variety of action, as the play deals only with love, its emotions and their its obstacles and fruition. Anyhow this lack of variety does not lead to monotony and the play has a very devotional effect on the minds of the spectators.

The plot of 'Mīlāvatī' has been made more interesting and useful with the scheme of queen's revenge. When Mīlāvatī applies fraud in order to wreak vengeance upon her deceitful enemy and uses the same instrument of treachery against her enemy which had been used by him against her husband, she not only saves her honour and punishes the enemy, but also, in a way, exhorts the Indian women to wield the arms and tact in order to deal properly with the enemies of the mother-land. The play elevates the ideal of woman-hood, and teaches the weaker sex how to deal with the pinch of a cold reality and revengeful lady.

'Bhārata-Durdaśā' is an original product of the author's mind; it

has not dwelt upon any source in inventing the plot of this play. Only the playwright's mind is deeply moved at the deplorable state of affairs in his country, and his pessimism about the future is perhaps justified when he looks at the morale and behavious of his country-men. Indolence, slavery, disunity and other evils work the downfall of the country, and in order to actuate a firm and fast feeling against these evils in the minds of the audience, the playwright has ended the play in a tragedy. He has successfully tried to arouse the feeling of sorrow, awakening and enterprise in the minds of the readers for improving their country's lot.

There is not much of organic plot in 'Vaidikī Hiṃsā'. The main theme of the play is to explain how people manage to indulge unscruplously in all sorts of vices and still cover them under the cloak of Dharma. What is the ultimate result of this kind of conduct is also made clear in the end. The play successfully fulfils the purpose for which it was intended, namely to denounce the evils of meat-diet, drinking and adultery etc.

In this way we find that Bharetendu achieved ~~mixm~~ considerable success in constructing the plot of his plays, even those in which action was very meagre.

Characterisation: Bharutendu's power of characterisation can also be discussed with reference to some of his plays. In 'Satya-Hariścandra' the hero stands as an unflinching, unrivalled ideal of truth, righteousness and humility. Successive trials and ordeals fail to lower the morale of the king, and through the most trying ordeals he comes out triumphant, yet unarrogating. The author has delineated him in such a way that, with the progress of the play, the king's person and behavious goes on enlisting the strong sympathy of the spectators. On the other hand their hatred and dislike for Viśvāmitra grows, and every time he makes his appearance, they curse him for his callousness and conspiracies. In sharp contrast to Hariścandra, he stands as a gigantic figure of wrath, pride and jealousy. But the steadfastness, humility and unswerving courage of the hero, in the end, move the austere heart of the wrathful Brahmana, and even Indra's jealousy turns into friendliness.

Śaivyā[1] remains an ideal of a faithful wife, unflinching, and loving her lord through thick and thin. She is ever prepared to sacrifice

1. शैव्या.

her all for the sake of her husband. She endorses the righteous policy of her lord and stands by him in honouring his word, although it involves her in a series of troubles and tribulations. Most affectionate though she is towards her son, she utters no word of complaint against her husband even when her beloved son, the solace of her life is gone.

The heroine of 'Śrī Candrāvalī' presents herself as an embodiment of selfless love and devotion. In the pangs of separation, she would like herself to be ruined, but prays to the Almighty that her beloved, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, should not suffer similar pangs. This is the height of true love, which is only another name for self-sacrifice. In this play Bharatendu has nicely combined the ideal of worldly love with that of sublime faith and devotion.

In 'Bhārata-Durdaśā', the two leading roles are of Bhārata, the hero, and his Misfortune (Bhārata-Durdaiva). Both have been sentimentally delineated, one being hard-pressed by slavery and other evils, while the other uses all nefarious methods to keep the hero down. The character of Bhārata brings to light the woeful picture of contemporary India. The Fortune of India (Bhārata-Bhāgya) deplores the impotence of the countrymen to reinstate India's lost glory and to cure the current evils.

In 'Nīladevī', Suryadeva, like a true Rajput, sticks to the tradition of chivalry; he attacks the enemy only when the opponent is aware and ready. His righteous path leads him to arrest an ultimate destruction in face of fraud and treachery. Abdul Sharif, the villain, is a man of the moment, who justifies all that can serve his purpose. Nīladevī, though possessed of womanly virtues and feminine qualities, is, at the same time, not weak and timid like her common counterpart in life. On the other hand, she is a very bold and resolute woman, who believes in the practice of paying back a person in his own coin. And proving more clever and tactful than her enemy and less scrupulous than her husband, she fully avenges herself on her enemy.

In 'Vaidikī Hiṁsā' the characters are little invested with individuality. They merely symbolise the evil and untoward practices that Bharatendu seeks to hit. In 'Prema-Yoginī', a brief but vivid sketch of those falsely-religious persons is drawn, who visit the temples daily, and are still far removed from piety and virtue. These people are not hard to find in society even today.

In short we can say that Bharatendu has not cut a sorry figure in his delineation of characters. They are possessed of life and adequate force. Bharatendu's characters, we find, aim more at the ideal than at the real, and here the tendency of the time is responsible. The proper tendency of Realism in Hindi drama began much later, in the second quarter of the twentieth century. Sanskrit drama also depicts its characters mostly as ideals of certain qualities, good or bad, noble or evil. And Bharatendu, we know, is greatly influenced by classical drama.

Dialogue

In dialogue, Bharatendu displays no special skill or power. His characters talk in a simple, straight-forward manner, and indulge in no circumlocution. Their conversation is lively and swift, and is neither dull nor over-serious. Bharatendu's dialogue is the real and common-place talk of everyday life, and no attempt has been made to make it rhetorical, or heavy with numerous figures of speech. At certain places the author has also introduced appropriate songs.

At the same time, in certain cases, Bharatendu's dialogue is very lengthy, and undramatic. Candravali's soliloquy in separation in Act II, or Śukadeva's soliloquy, in the Viskambhaka (prologue) of the same, as also Śaivya's lamentations over the death of her son cannot justify their length and spoil the dramatic effect. But they are the outcome of peculiar situations of heightened emotion and unbalanced sentiment. They do not give any impression of artificiality, and often the audience is swayed along with the emotions of the speaker.

Language

In the use of language Bharatendu has achieved great control and perfection. Ordinarily, his language is very simple and smooth, lively and forceful. While hard Perso-Arabic words have been carefully avoided, simple current and appropriate Persian words have been freely used. In the same way difficult and high-sounding Sanskrit words, which are beyond the grasp of the common man, have been mostly eschewed. On several occasions simple words and short sentences, dripping with emotion, reach the very depth of the reader's mind. In the touching laments of Śaivyā over the death of her son, (हाय बेटा ! अरे आज मुझे किसने लूट लिया ! हाय, मेरी बोलती हुई चिड़िया कहाँ उड़ गई ! हाय, अब मैं किसका मुख देख कर जीऊंगी। हाय मेरी अंधी की लकड़ी कौन छीन लेगया। हाय, मेरा ऐसा सुन्दर खिलौना किस ने तोड़ डाला। etc.

We find that simple, common sentences couched in natural and touching words, strongly arouse sympathy in the hearts of the audience. While pathos flows freely from these simple short sentences, bombastic and difficult words would have spoiled the effect.

Bharatendu has also made a free and appropriate use of proverbs and popular sayings. Verse, too, has been extravagantly interspersed in all his plays. The language of the verse is Braja Bhāṣā, but it is not very hard and distorted like the language of earlier works. It is marked by clarity and is easy, delicate and finished.

Conception of Love.

Love is a very comprehensive term, which includes all types of affection, passion, patriotism and divine devotion. Bharatendu's life was inspired with two kinds of love: (i) Love of God or virtue, and (ii) love of the country i.e. patriotism. In all his plays this love is distilled in one form or the other. Purely sexsual love is nowhere expressed in his dramas. While in 'Śrī Candrāvalī' the love of God is predominant, and in 'Satya-Hariścandra that of truthfulness, in 'Bhārata Durdaśā' and 'Nīladevī' Bharatendu has given vent to his feelings of patriotism.

In 'Śrī Candrāvalī' Śuka Deva says—

"जो परम प्रेम अमृतमय एकान्त भक्ति है, जिसके उदय होते ही अनेक प्रकार के आग्रह-स्वरूप ज्ञान-विज्ञानादि अंधकार नाश हो जाते हैं और जिसके चित्त में आते ही संसार का निगड़ आप से आप खुल जाता है — वह किसी को नहीं मिली"......"इनका (व्रज की गोपियों का) कैसा विलक्षण प्रेम है कि अकथनीय और अकरणीय है। क्योंकि जहां ~~मह~~ माहात्म्य-ज्ञान ~~नहीं~~ होता है वहाँ प्रेम नहीं होता और जहां पूर्ण प्रीति होती है वहां माहात्म्य-ज्ञान नहीं होता। ये धन्य है कि इसमें दोनों एक संग मिलती हैं।"

Candrāvalī, the heroine of the play, is nothing short of an embodiment of selfless love and sacrifice when she says:- "भगवन, मैं उस निर्दयी को चाहूं पर वह मुझे न चाहे," otherwise he too will suffer similar pangs of separation.*

This love of Candrāvalī in fact symbolises author's love of God, in which union takes place only in the end.

Bharatendu's loyalty to the Crown, his benevolent acts and his service of the mother-tongue were all manifestations of his feeling of patriotism. The contrast between the glorious past and the present ruined state of his mother-land cuts him to the quick. He is verily

smitten with grief when he says—

"हाय! यह वही भूमि है जहाँ साक्षात् भगवान श्री कृष्ण चन्द्र के दूतत्व करने पर भी वीरोत्तम दुर्योधन ने कहा था 'सच्यग्रं नैव दास्यामि बिना युद्धेन केशव' और आज हम उसी भूमि को देखते हैं कि श्मशान हो रही है। अरे, यहां की योग्यता, विद्या, सभ्यता, उद्योग, उदारता, धन, बल, मान, दृढ़चित्तता, सत्य सब कहां गए। . . . . (Act II)

In powerful words the author delineates a glorious picture of ancient India:-

"हाय, यह वही भारत है जो किसी समय सारी पृथ्वी का शिरोमणि गिना जाता था?

भारत के भुज-बल जग रच्छित।
भारत विद्या लहि जग सिच्छित॥
भारत तेज जगत विस्तारा।
भारत भय कंपत संसारा॥
जाके तनिकहिं भौंह हिलाए।
थर-थर कंपत नृप डरपाए॥
भारत किरिन जगत उजियारा।
भारत-जीव जिअत संसारा॥

In the end, the author gets desparate and suggests the following:-

तुम में जल नहिं जमुना गंगा।
बढ़हु वेग करि तरल तरंगा॥
धोवहु यह कलंक की रासी।
बोरहु किन झट मथुरा कासी॥
अहो भयानक भ्राता सागर।
तुम तरंगनिधि अति बल-आगर॥
बढ़हु न बेगि धाई क्यों भाई।
देहु भारत भुवतुरत डुबाई॥

Loyalty to the Crown

On the whole Bharatendu has praised the British Rule in India. Here he does not show himself off as a man of the government. Firstly, he finds the British rule, which brought peace and security to the people, decidedly better than the type of government that was going on before their occupation. Secondly, in praising British rule, he is really inspired by the golden Rāma-Rājya. He address the British Queen as आर्येश्वरी, माता etc., and the Prince of Wales as आर्येश्वर etc. At the same time the author has raised a strong note of revolt against the evils of British rule, such as the racial discrimination, maltreatment of the Indian by the English, the ban on Indians' becoming the members of Governor-General's and Governor's Councils, and occupying other high posts. The thing that grieved him most was that Indian wealth was quickly reaching foreign lands and alien pockets under the British rule:

अंग्रेज़ राज सुख साज सजे सब भारी।
पै धन विदेश चलि जात इहै अति ख्वारी॥

While the playwright admonishes the Indian woman to come out of their indolence on the road to progress by following Western women in their wisdom, education, self-respect and patriotism, he also warns them against forsaking their bashfulness and walking arm-in-arm with their husbands, in the fashion of Western ladies.

Sentiments

Bharatendu has given expression to all the chief sentiments of the classical theory. In 'Śrī Candrāvalī' the Amorous is predominant. In simple, emotional words, the heroine describes her state of mind in separation from her lord:-

चन्द्रावली — नहीं सखी, ऊपर से दुखी नहीं रहती पर मेरा जी जानता है जैसी रातें बीतती हैं।

मनमोहन तें बिछुरी जब सों
तन आंसुन सों सदा धोवती हैं।
'हरिचंद जू' प्रेम के फंद परी
कुल की कुल लाजहिं खोवती हैं॥

दुख के दिन को कोउ भांति बितै
बिरहागम रैन संजोवती हैं॥
हम ही अपुनी दशा जानें सखी
निसि सोवती हैं किधौं रोवती हैं॥

The examples of the 'Quiet' sentiment are also found in the above play. The Heroic and the Pathetic are found in 'Nīladevī' and 'Satya-Hariś-candra'. Examples of other sentiments, e.g. the Terrible, the Marvellous etc. are also not lacking in other plays.

Natural Descriptions

It is usually found that some writers are very fond of describing romantic, beautiful and marvellous scenes of Nature. While they achieve great success in it, there are others who deal more precisely with human nature and the psycho-analytical study of man. There are still others who can parade their skill in depicting both of them.

In Sanskrit literature, especially in the works of Kalidasa, Nature occupies a very lofty place. Natural descriptions of every kind — lovely and romantic, dreadful and awe-inspiring — are abundant in Sanskrit works. Sanskrit poets were highly sensitive, and alive to Nature, its loveliness and charm. This tendency gradually diminished as time went on. From the eighth and ninth centuries onwards, natural descriptions began to be scarce and artificial in Sanskrit literature. Perhaps the chief cause for this decline was that while the classical poets passed most of their time

amidst the genuine beauty and romance of Nature, the later poets lacked to realise the vital importance and advantage of Nature in a poet's life. They migrated to big cities, the centres of artificial and unnatural ways of life. So they could get inspiration only from artificial objects like gardens and parks of the cities, and not from Nature at large. Even today, great artists like to live in open Nature, on river banks or by the side of water-falls.

Bharatendu also has paid very little attention to real Nature. In a splendid manner he may describe the natural objects that he may meet in or about the cities. Even when he portrays a word picture of Gaṅgā in the third act of 'Satya-Hariścandra', it is not the pure, clean and cooling Gaṅgā flowing zigzag in some lofty range of mountains, or in some enchanting sylvan land, but the artificial and city Gaṅgā as it flows under the bathing Ghats at Kashi, where hundred thousands of men and women take their plunge with a belief of washing off their sins:-

नव उज्वल जलधार, हार हीरक सी सोहति।
बिच-बिच छहरति बूंद मध्य मुक्ता-मनि सोहति॥
~~लोल~~ लहर लहि पवन एक पै इक इमि आवत।
जिमि नर-~~गन~~ गन मन विविध मनोरथ करत मिटावत॥
कहुं सुंदरी नहात नीर कर-जुगल उछारत।
जुग अंबुज मिलि मुक्त गुच्छ मनु सुच्छ निकारत॥
~~सुन्दरी~~ सुन्दरि-सीस-मुख नीर-मध्य इमि सुन्दर सोहत।
कमल बेलि लहलही नवल कुसुमन मन मोहत ॥etc.

(Act III)

Still, there are a few occasions where Bharatendu has touched real Nature:-

कूजत कहुँ कलहंस कहूँ मज्जत पारावत।
कहुँ कारंडव उड़त कहूँ जल कुक्कुट धावत।
चक्रवाक कहुँ बसत कहूँ बक ध्यान लगावत।
सुक पिक जल कहुँ पियत कहूँ भ्रमरावलि गावत॥
कहुँ तट पर नाचत मोर बहु शोर विविध पच्छी करत।
जल पान न्हान करि सुख भरे तट सोभा सब जिय धरत ॥etc.

(Sri Candravali, Act IV)

By his very nature, Bharatendu was jovial and gay. He remained cheerful and happy amidst all woes and worries. He was always full of life and liveliness, and his plays are also filled with this spirit. His

humour is natural and spontaneous, and not forced or artificial. The humorous effect is produced not by distortion of words of phrases; nor has the author introduced a particular humorous character like the Vidūṣaka of the Sanskrit plays. His humour results from situation and prevades the whole of the play in certain measure.

Today, Hindi plays mostly (e.g. those of Seth Govind Das and Lakṣmī Narayan Miśra lack humour; or they are farces altogether. Modern Hindi drama, for the most part, seems to have purged itself of all humour, and transported the same to the realm of farce and satire.

…slations To add a word about Bharatendu's translations we can say that they bear a strong testimony to his ability, genius and skill. Rightly speaking, it is perhaps easier to produce an original work than a translation retaining the force and interest of the original and at the same time, being quite faithful to it. Bharatendu has achieved great success in translation, and his translation of the difficult and complicated Sanskrit drama 'Mudra-rakṣasa' adds to his credit. His translations, retaining the force, flow and interest of the original, betraying looseness nowhere, appear to be original works, if read independently without the help of the original plays.

…neral …iticism As we have said before, Bharatendu's plays follow the technique of classical drama for the most part. At the same time they indicate author's familiarity with and influence of Bengali drama and English drama. In many of his plays e.g. Satya Hariścandra, Prema Yoginī, Śrī Candrāvalī) he has given the Nāndī, the Viṣkumbhaka and Preslavana in the fashion of classical plays. The Bharata-Vakya a typically classical feature, is also present in some of his plays (e.g. Viṣasya Viṣam Auṣadham; Bhārata Jananī) As Sanskrit drama does not divide itself into any scenes, some plays of Bharatenda also follow the same method e.g. Bhārata Durdaśā; Andhera Nagrī). Again, verse is profusely used in his plays as in Sanskrit drama. The 'aside' and the 'soliloquy' too have been very frequently used. At several places his soliloquies are very lengthy and even undramatic (e.g. Śrī Candrāvalī; Bhārata Durdaśā). In Sanskrit dramaturgy, certain scenes and actions, like death, battle, kissing, embracing etc. are banned for the stage. Bhārat-endu also has tried to obey these classical canons in the course of his dramas.

But, in addition to this classical influence, Bharatendu's plays also exhibit more or less impression of the Bengali drama (and through it of English drama), the Parsi theatre and Rasa-lila also. In Śrī Candrāvalī the influence of Rasa-lila is obvious, while 'Nīladevī' has the touch of 'Nautankis' in it.

Chapter V. OTHER PLAYWRIGHTS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The rise of Hindi drama, as we have found, was delayed for a long time. Although one or two plays of merit appeared before Bharatendu, still he is the first writer who can be rightly called the first Hindi dramatist, the very father of Hindi drama. But Bharatendu's lead was briskly followed by numerous other writers, so that once he set foot on that highroad of Hindi drama, it was soon thronged by dozens of other playwrights. The real cause of this swift development of drama is not far to seek. Dramatic tradition, in fact, never died out completely in India. In different forms and through various channels it went on all the time. Popular types of drama, like the Rasa-lila, Rama-lila, Nautankis etc. were much liked by the village people in medieval times. In cities too, with the restoration of peace and strong central government, with the study of Sanskrit literature and with the introduction of the lithographic press, an atmosphere congenial for the rise of drama had been created. The regular forces required for the rise of drama had been arrayed, and some one was needed simply to strike the first blow. And once the ball was set rolling by Bharatendu, its progress continued unchecked and in full swing for a number of years.

Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa

Of these followers of Bharatendu, the minor ones we shall take up a little later. Of the leading playwrights of this period, L. Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa deserves the first place. He was a promising young man, much interested in the study and service of Hindi literature. He was a close friend of Bharatendu; like Bharatendu, Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa also died very young, at the age of thirty, just two years after the death of Bharatendu.

Besides 'Parīkṣāguru'[1], which is a novel, Śrī Niwāsa has written four plays. His first play 'Prahlāda-Carita'[2] has eleven scenes, and deals with the extremely popular mythological story of Prahlāda. While the other plays of Śrī Niwāsa are quite good, Prahlada Carita is a miserable failure. The changes introduced by the author have not enhanced the dramatic effect, but have made the work very loose, incoherent and unimpressive. Neither has the dialogue any force, nor has the author shown any skill in his delineation of characters.

His second play, 'Taptā-Saṃvaraṇa'[3] (finished 1874) was first published in a book form in 1883. It is a romantic drama in five acts, and deals with the love-story of Taptā and Saṃvaraṇa. Taptā, daughter of the Sun, is so much lost in thoughts of her lover (Saṃ-Varaṇa) that she does not notice the arrival of sage Gautama. In wrath the sage curses her that her lover would forget all about her, but when propitiated the sage agrees that her lover will recognize her as soon as their bodies touch each other. While roaming in state of separation, Taptā accidentally meets Saṃvaraṇa, who is senseless; as they touch each other, the curse terminates. They recognize each other and their marrage is joyfully celebrated.

The play is named after the hero and the heroine, has a 'Prastāvanā' and no sub-division into acts — all in the classical fashion. The author is obviously indebted to Kalidasa, and the ideas of Gautama's curse and Taptā's writing a love-letter to her lover have been directly borrowed from 'Śakuntalā'. Although 'Taptā-Saṃvaraṇa' is decidedly better than his first play, still the author has not achieved much success in plot-construction, characterisation or dialogue.

'Raṇadhīra aur Prema-Mohinī'[4] (1877) is again a romantic drama, much similar to 'Romeo and Juliet' of Shakespeare. With a tragic ending and the absence of 'Prastāvanā', the play betrays a modern touch. Its theme is the love and tragic end of Ranadhira, prince of Patana, and Prema-Mohini, princess of Surat. This is, perhaps, the best of all the four plays of Śri Niwasa, and can be successfully staged after some minor modifications. The plot has been properly constructed, and the amorous, the heroic and the pathetic have been nicely blended together. The characters of Randa-dhira, Prem-Mohini and Ripudamana have been nicely portrayed. The dialogue

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1. परीक्षा-गुरु; 2. प्रह्लाद-चरित; 3. तप्ता संवरण; 4. रणधीर और प्रेममोहिनी.

is conducted in language suitable to the characters, and it displays emotion, force and softness according to time and situation. On certain occasions, Urdu and Persian words have been un-necessarily used. Some specimens of the Marwari language are also found in the play:-

नथुराम —(रोनी सूरत बना कर) बाप जी, हूँ तो मारियो गयो, कुतारी मौत मारियो गयो।
म्हारी शगरी उधराणी डूब जासी; नौकर जणारो जठै माल दबा बीमारी पैड़ी गैणा
गाणारो, लेन देन, मालतालरो धन्दो, आड़तियारो कामकाज, कुण भुगतासी?
(Act II, Scene 3)

Verses, generally of a proverbial nature, have been freely used-

सज्जन तजत न नीतिपथ, यदपि प्राण तज देत।
भूखो रहत मृगेन्द्र तऊ तृण न कबहु मुख लेत॥ (Act V scene 1)

Prema-Mohini sums up the ideal of heroism and पतिव्रतधर्म in the following words-

प्रेम० — सखी! रणधीर सिंह मेरे सर्वस्व हैं, चन्द्रमा और चांदनी की तरह मैं अपना प्राण उनके अधीन समझती हूँ। परन्तु रण से विमुख होकर प्राण प्यारे फूलों की सेज पर सोवें तो उसके बदले रण में बैरी के हाथ उनका शरशय्या पर सोना मुझ को अच्छा लगता है। मैं तत्काल तन तज कर प्यारे प्राण पति की चरण सेवा में चली जाऊंगी। (Act V scene 1)

Deeply pathetic are these words of Campā, uttered on the death of the hero and the heroine-

चम्पा — जैसे सूर्य चन्द्रमा के मिलने से (अमावस को) अधिक अंधेरी होती है, तैसे आज इन दोनों के मिलने से दशा हुई। ये दोनों क्या इस लायक थे?

Extremely touching are the following lines again-

सूरतपति — ... हाय! मेरी जन्म की भी कमाई ~~लुट~~ पल भर में लुट गई। ये विवाह का सामान इसके क्रिया कर्म में काम आवेगा। मोहिनी! तू अपने दुखिया बाप से एक बात कहे बिना उसको दुःख-सागर में छोड़कर कहां चली गई ....

मालती —(चम्पा से रोकर) सखी, हमारे भाग्य में क्या दुष्ट दैव ने यही लिख दिया था कि रणधीर और प्रेम मोहिनी के लिये फूलों की सेज के बदले चन्दन की चिता बना[1] थी।

The fourth and the last play of Sri Niwasa is 'Sam-Yogita Swayamvara'. It is based on the famous 'Pṛthvīrāja Rāso' of Chandra Kavi, but the playwright has tempered with the established facts of history. In this play, Jaya Canda himself offers the hand of his daughter in marriage to Pṛthvī-Rāja. As compared with his third play, this work appears to be very poor in dramatic skill and art.

In all his plays except 'Ranadhira Aur Prema-Mohini' the author has given the traditional Prastāvanā of the classical plays. There is again an abundance of 'asides', and 'soliloquies' too are not wanting in this play. Dialogues are, in many cases, very lengthy and un-dramatic. He

1. संयोगिता-स्वयंवर।

has observed a middle course in language, and has tried to banish very hard Persian and Sanskrit words from his works.

Premaghana Badrī Nārāyaṇa Chaudhari 'Premaghana' was another contemporary of Bharatendu. His 'Bhārata-Saubhāgya'[1] has a political theme. It is an imitation of Bharatendu's 'Bhārata-Durdaśā, and bears the reflection of his 'Bhārata-Jananī' too. With a prelude and six acts, it has a cast of fifty three male and forty-two female characters, besides other minor characters. On the whole the play is nothing short of a failure. Its study can inspire no Indian with pride for the past, worry for the present, or hope for the future. The language is mostly Urdu, and Urdu verses and Ghazals have been frequently used. In the third scene of the fifth act, speeches after speeches, lengthy and boring, run on to eighteen pages — all couched in hard Persian and Arabic words. The play is very poor in characterisation and plot-construction, and is totally unfit for the stage.

'Prayāga-Rāmāgamana'[2] (1904) is another short play of 'Prema-Ghana', in which the author has achieved good success. It describes Rama's visit to Bharadwāja's hermitage at Prayāga, in the company of his wife and younger brother. As in Sanskrit dramas educated men speak Sanskrit while the women mostly use Prakrit, so here Rama and others speak in'Khari Boli' while Sita uses Braja Bhāṣā. The play has some portion of verse, which too is not bad.

In addition to these two plays, the author has written 'Vārāṅganā-Rahasya'[3], which is incomplete, and 'Vṛddha-Vilāpa'[4] which is a minor composition.

Rādhā Kṛṣṇadāsa: Rādhā Kṛṣṇadāsa[5] was the cousin of Bharatendu, and was, like him fired with the spirit of patriotism and service of the Hindi literature. He completed 'Satī-Pratāpa', which had been left unfinished by Bharatendu.

His first play 'Dukhinī Bālā'[6] has six scenes in all. It has the prelude (Prastāvanā) and the Bharata-Vākya, but no Nāndī. It is all in prose and strikes a strong note of revolt against child-marriage, widow-remarriage, and marriage on the basis of horoscopes etc. This play was first published in 1880, but was revised a few years later, and a few additions and alterations were made.

1. भारतसौभाग्य; 2. प्रयाग-रामागमन; 3. वाराङ्गना-रहस्य; 4. वृद्ध-विलाप; 5. राधाकृष्णदास, 6. दुखिनीबाला,

His second play 'Mahārānī Padmāvatī'[1] has six acts and ninteen scenes. It deals with the popular theme of Alauddin's seige of Chitor in order to get Padmāvatī. Having failed to acquire his object by force, he applies for truce and arrests the hospitable Rana. Padmāvatī deals the traitor with treachery, and with a cunning device, liberates her husband from the enemy's bonds. In a desparate fight that follows, Rajputs work havoc with the hostile army, but being greatly outnumbered, the fort of Chitor falls to the enemy. The brave Rajput women offer 'Johar' ceremony, and Alauddin, in spite of his victory, has to go back dis-appointed and disillusioned.

The playwright has shown adequate power of characterisation. In a lucid yet forceful style, he produces the inspiring atmosphere of heroism. In the introduction to the play, he has given a brief history of Mewar.

His third play 'Dharmālāpa'[2] is just a long conversation, and has no acts or scenes. 'Sanātana Dharma' is seated in the centre, and is surrounded on all sides by Vedantists, Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, Arya Samajists, Brahmos, Theosphists, New Fashionists and followers of various other religions and sects. A discussion is going on about religion, and in the end exmphasis is laid on the unity of God. All the religions are nothing but means of approaching one and the same God.

The last and the best play of 'Rādhā Kṛṣṇadāsa' is 'Mahārāṇā Pratāpa'[3] or 'Rājasthāna Kesarī'[4] It is a beautiful drama and has been staged several times. It consists of a Prastāvanā and seven acts with thirty-six scenes. It is a historical drama, but alongside of the main plot of Pratāpa and Akbar, a sub-plot of the love and patriotism of Mālatī and Gulāb Sinha also runs on. Although the plot is sufficiently heavy, yet it is well knit together, and betrays no signs of looseness or incohesion. The characters of Mahārāṇā Pratāp, Akbar Pṛthvī Rāj and his wife have been very nicely depicted.

Pratap is the embodiment of scarifice, chivalry and martiality. In the following words he sums up his ideal of heroism-

जब लौं तन मैं प्रान तब लौं मुख को मोड़ौं।
जब लौं कर में शक्ति न तब लौं शस्त्रहिं छोड़ौं॥

1. महारानी पद्मावती, 2. धर्मालाप, 3. महाराणा प्रताप; 4. राजस्थान केसरी

अब लौं जिह्वा सरस दीन वच नाहिं उच्चारौं।
जब लौं धड़ पर सीस झुकावन नाहिं विचारौं॥

(Act VII, Scene 5)

Akbar's character has also been vividly depicted. He is a man of high ideals, having great respect for the wisdom and chivalry of the enemy. A single strong rebuff from Pṛthvī Rāj's Queen on Nauroz[1] day is sufficient to induce him to give up that misdirected evil practice of enjoying the selected beauties of his kingdom. Here is Akbar, waiting impatiently (on the Nauroz day) for the arrival of some fresh beauty-

अकबर — हाय! मैं इतना बड़ा शाहनशाह, मेरे यहां दुनिया के ऐशो-~~आराम~~ आराम के सामान मुहय्या, मगर मेरे दिल को एकदम भी राहत नहीं, शबोरोज़ फ़िक्र, लह्ज: बलहज: तरद्दुदात, रोज़ नई ख्वाहिशें, रोज़ नये हौसले और हाय! इन गुलबदनों की चाह ने तो मुझे पागल बना दिया है। कितनी देर से कितने कामों का हर्ज करके बावला सा यहां घुम रहा हूं ...... मालूम होता है, बी नसीबन हमारे गुले मुराद के लिये आ रही हैं। ...... (Act II, Scene 3)

It is the queen of Pṛthvī Rāj who is brought there by trick. But as soon as Akbar tries to touch her, she bursts forth, sharply rebukes him, and in the end draws out her dagger to put an end to that debauch's life. It is then that Akbar promises to give up this shameless and sensual practice for good. Quite interesting is this change in his attitude, just after a few minutes, when he begs pardon of the queen:-

अकबर — (रानी से) मैं अपने गुनाहों के लिये सख्त नादिम हुआ, मेरा कसूर मुआफ़ करो, मेरा जां-बख़्शी करो, मैं खुदा की कसम खा कर कहता हूं, मुझे मेरी उम्रे-नातजुर्बाकार और दुनियावी यारों ने धोखा दिया। मैं अब तक इस पाकदामनी, इस बहादुरी इस नेकचलनी को कभी ख्वाब में भी न सोच न पा। .... अब किसी के साथ ऐसा गुनाह सरज़द न होगा। (Act II, Sc. 3)

Doubtless to say, 'Mahārāṇā Pratāpa' is the best play of this period after Bharatendu. After Rādhā-Kṛṣṇadāsa, Prasāda only succeeded in producing plays of such a high-standard.

In addition to characterisation, the playwright has a perfect control over the language. The language — be it verse or prose — is forceful, emotional and soft as the occasion demands. Muslim characters speak Urdu, as can be judged from the two speeches of Akbar quoted above. The dialogues are very lively, powerful and effective. In the introduction, the playwright has discussed various versions of the history of Maharana Pratap.

1. नौरोज़

Kiśorilāla Goswāmi 'Mayanka-Mañjarī'[1] of Kiśori Lāl Goswāmī[2], is another important play, consisting of five long acts. Its theme is romantic, and centres round the love, and happy-marriage (गान्धर्व-विवाह) of Mayanka, the daughter of the minister of Avantipura, and Virendra Sinha, the son of the King. The father of the heroine intends to marry her to Basant Deva, another prince, who has already got a wife and is immoral. Several plots are designed and obstacles of different kind are put in the way of Mayanka Mañjarī and Virendra. But both of them work with fortitude, wisdom and bravery, and coming over all the difficulties, they are married in the end. Two friends of Mayanka are also married to the two friends of Virendra.

The play follows the classical practice when it gives a Prastāvanā, no sub-division of acts into scenes, and includes poetry in course of dialogues. But the classical canons have not been followed strictly. The play, although named as 'Mahā Nāṭaka' has only five acts, and the kissing of Mayanka and Virendra, the death of Durjana-Bandhu etc. are scenes which are banned for the stage in classical dramaturgy. The author has written this play with the object of reform, unity and independence of women. The amorous and the heroic are predominant in the play.

'Nāṭya-Sambhava'[3], (1904) is another play written by Kisori Lala Goswami. In this play the author deals with the traditional origin of Drama, according to which Bharata brought this art from heaven to the earth. The play abounds in verse, and is of the standard of author's previous play.

Bala Krsna Bhatta Bāla Krṣna[4] Bhatta has written several original plays and translated others from Bengali and Sanskrit. He translated 'Padmāvatī'[5] and 'Sarmisthā'[6], the two Bengali plays of Michael Madhusudan Datta, and also translated 'Mṛcchakaṭika'[7] from Sanskrit. He also wrote a few farces (e.g. Kali rāja Kī Sabhā'[8] 'Rail Kā Vikaṭa Khela'[9] and 'Bāla Vivāha'[10]) which satires the contemporary social and political evils.

His beautiful original play 'Damayantī Svayamvara'[11] was recently published by Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad. It is a nice play, based on the theme of the marriage of Nala and Damayantī. His 'Bṛhannala'[12] deals

1. मयंक – मञ्जरी. 2. किशोरी लाल गोस्वामी. 3. नाट्य – सम्भव. 4. बालकृष्ण भट्ट. 5. पद्मावती. 6. शर्मिष्ठा. 7. मृच्छकटिक. 8. कलिराज की सभा. 9. रेल का विकट खेल. 10. बाल विवाह. 11. दमयन्ती – स्वयंवर. 12. बृहन्नला.

with the battle between Arjuna disguised as 'Bṛhannalā' at the court of Rājā of Virāṭa, and the mighty army of the Kauravas. It concludes with the revelation of the five brothers living in disguise at that court as the real Pandavas.

The play begins immediately after the benedictory verse and has no Prastāvanā. It has four short acts, which have been further divided into scenes. It has several 'asides' and 'soliloquies' and some of the speeches are very long.

Here is Draupadī (disguised as Sairendhrī) sorrowing over her sad plight as a servant-

द्रौपदी — हा। एक वह समय था जब कि हम भी ऐसे ही पिता पाञ्चाल-राज के घर में रहकर राज नन्दिनी कहलाती थीं। अहा! वह समय कैसा अनिर्वचनीय सुख का दाता था। हाय! वे दिन अब क्या फिर आ सकते हैं। ...... यह हमारे ही दुर्भाग्य का फल है जो आर्यपुत्र पाण्डव भी दुःख भोगते हैं। ... (Act II, Scene 2)

When in the last scene the Pandavas disclose their identity, the Rājā of Virāṭa, taking them as usurpers, gets extremely wrathful and draws out his sword to kill Yudhiṣṭhira, seated on his throne-

विराट — (तलवार निकाल कर) रे पिशाच कंक, तेरे प्रतिपालन का अन्त में यही फल मिला। हाय! हमने विषवृक्ष का आरोपण किया। काल सर्प को दूध पिलाया। रे पामर नीच, तेरे योग्य यह सिंहासन है।

'Venu-Saṃhāra'[1] is another short play of Bhaṭṭa. It has the Nāndī in Sanskrit, the Prastāvanā and three acts in mixed prose and verse. Sanskrit Ślokas have also been given. Like his first play, this work also abounds in long soliloquies and asides.

'Śikṣādāna' or 'Jaisā Kāma Vaisā Pariṇāma'[2] (1877) is perhaps the best play of Bhaṭṭa. It is a social drama, revolting strongly against the evils of drinking and prostitution. The hero, Rasika Lāla is so much lost in wine and womanising that he never cares to attend to her faithful wife. He wastes money extravagantly on his ugly pursuits, and in the end comes to his senses when beaten and betrayed by his most beloved harlot.

In a very vivid and impressive manner the playwright has portrayed the fickleness of a harlot's mind. Mohinī herself sums up the true charact-er of a prostitute in the following words-

मोहिनी— ....हम लोग बाज़ार की बैठने वाली हैं जिसे हम चाहें उसके लिये प्राण तक दे डालें) सिर्फ जी आना चाहिए, और जिसे हम बिगाड़ा चाहें उसका निस्तार भी नहीं है। हमारे स्वभाव को नहीं जानता, सुन—

मन से करें और को ध्यान, दृग से करें और को मान।
अन्य पुरुष से करैं बिहार, तन से करें और को प्यार॥

1. वेणुसंहार. 2. शिक्षादान अथवा जैसा काम वैसा परिणाम.

Mālatī, the faithful wife of Rasika Lal, in order to bring her husband round, plays an interesting trick with him. When her husband is about ~~the~~ to return home, she pretends making love to her female attendant dressed as a man. When Rasika Lal, mad with jealousy and wrath, decides to punish her, she makes a very bold reply-

मालती — क्यों नहीं, क्या हमारा आदमी का चोला नहीं है ? या कि हमारी देह लोहू मांस की नहीं है ? क्या हमारे मन नहीं है ? क्या हमारे इन्द्रियां नहीं हैं ? क्या हम को सुख दुःख का ज्ञान नहीं है ? हम तो कोई चीज न ठहरीं, फिर तुम हमारा बड़ा सत्कार करते होगा न ।
(Scene 5)

Rasika Lal swears to give up that habit for ever, and the play ends with this Bharata-Vākya-

रसिक० — होहिं एक पत्नी-व्रत-रत सब भारत नर-वर ।
तजहिं कुपथ, पथ गहहिं धर्म कर दुर्मति तजकर ॥
तजि वेश्या-संग-रमन करहिं श्रद्धा निज तिय पर ।
जासों सुधरहिं दशा दीन भारत को ~~सत्कार ॥~~ सत्वर ॥

Ayodhya Sinha Upadhyaya

Ayodhya Sinha Upadhyaya[1] is one of the most outstanding Hindi poets. Today he is known to us only as a poet, but in the beginning of his literary career he tried his hand at drama and novel too. He wrote two plays, both of which are not popular today.

The first drama, 'Rukmini-Parinaya'[2] (1884) begins with the Nāndi and Prastāvanā, and has nine acts with one more additional act. Rukmini's marriage, being settled with Śiśupāla, the latter reaches her father's capital. On the other hand Rukmini, who had developed a weakness for Kṛṣṇa for his great virtues, invites Kṛṣṇa for marriage. In the battle that follow between two rival bride-grooms, Kṛṣṇa comes out victorious, and he takes his devoted bride to his capital in triumph. In the additional act, the love-sports of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmini are recorded.

The play closely follows classical rules of dramatury. The playwright has achieved only some success in plot construction and characterisation. The dialogues are too lengthy, and the asides are too numerous and inapport -oned. The language is loaded with difficult 'tatsama' words, which are abundant in both prose and verse. Totally unfit as the play is for the stage, it is also not very amusing for the reading purpose.

His other play 'Pradyumna-Vijaya'[3] (1893) is based on Bharatendu's

1. अयोध्या सिंह उपाध्याय. 2. रुक्मिणी-परिणय. 3. प्रद्युम्न-विजय.

translation of 'Dhanañjaya- Vijaya'. Like the other play, 'Pradyumna-Vijaya' also strictly follows classical canons. It begins with the Nāndī and the Prastāvanā. Three-fourth of the play is in verse, and only one-fourth in prose.

Nikumbha, ademon, threatens to arrest all the Yadavas and to carry away five hundred daughters of Brahmadatta, in case he is refused a share in their sacrifice. This being done all the five hundred daughters of Brahmadatta are carried away by force. Pradyumna engages the demon in a battle, defeats him and recovers those five hundred young girls.

In conformity with the classical rules, the battle-scene is not actually shown on the stage, but its details are informed in a dialogue. The heroic sentiment prevails, but the language has been distorted and mutilated in order to enhance the heroic effect.

With these two plays, the dramatic career of Upādhyāya came to an end. And as both these plays appeared in the ninteenth century, we have placed the author in that period.

Minor ~~Playwrights~~. Playwrights.

While Bharatendu and some of his gifted contemporaries (discussed here above) were bent upon writing highly artistic and powerful plays, irrespective of the deteriorating public taste, there were others who, having taken Bharatendu's lead, took to writing cheaper and less artistic plays, just in order to cater to the low-taste of the people. The dramas of the Bharatendu-school no doubt possessed great art and dramatic skill, yet they did not try to, and so could not, pacify the vulgar and uneducated taste of the masses. Consequently their plays remained strictly 'class plays' as they could win the applause of the educated class alone, and failed to be 'mass-plays'. Naturally some playwrights, who lacked the high sense of reformation in art, were tempted to win popularity among the masses by writing inartistic plays which were liked by the people in general. In the following pages we shall discuss some important plays of the minor group.

Rādhā Carana Goswāmī has written some half a dozen plays. Of these 'Śrīdāmā Nāṭaka' (1984) which has five acts besides a prelude, deals with

Kṛṣṇa's help of Sudāmā in the latter's hour of need. 'Sati Candravali' (1890) has seven scenes. Its theme is historical and is related to the reign of Aurangzeb. Candravali, the heroine is carried away forcibly by prince Ashraf. The Hindu public appeals to the Emperor for her release; getting disappointed the masses rise in revolt and Ashraf is murdered. In the end Candravali also commits suicide in order to put a stop to unnecessary bloodshed on both sides. The play is interesting, and the language and sentiments have been properly handled by the author.

'Amara Sinha Rāṭhaurā'[1] (1884) is again a historical play, replete with the heroic sentiment. It has fifteen scenes, and deals with the excile of Amara Sinha, son of Raja Gaja Sinha of Jodhpur, his heroic deeds and ultimate death. ~~xBhangaxTarangaxandxBudhexMunhaxetc.~~

'Tana Mana Dhana Gosāīn Jī Ke Arpaṇa'[2] 'Bhanga Taranga'[3] and 'Būḍhe Munha[4] etc.' are farces and have been discussed under that head in Chapter VI.

Pratāpa Nārāyaṇa Miśra's 'Bhārata Durdaśā'[5] (1902) has three acts, and the work is mostly an imitation of Bharatendu's 'Bhārata Durdaśā.' His 'Kali Kautuka Rūpaka'[6] (1886) has the benedictory stanza, no prelude and four scenes. The play reflects the evil consequences of drinking and adultery, and refers to the immoral lives of Sadhus and vices generally prevalent in families and students.

'Haṭhī Hamīra'[7] is a historical play written by the same author. It refers to the battle between Alauddin and Hamīra, which took place as a result of the latter's giving shelter to a disobedient but virtuous chief of the former.

In addition to these, Pratāpa Nārāyaṇa Miśra has written a few farces, which we shall discuss a little later.

Pratāpa Nārāyaṇa, in these plays gives sufficient proof of his genius, poetic skill and refined humour. He makes frequent use of proverbs and popular sayings, which impart life to his language.

Devakī Nandana Tripāṭhī wrote several minor plays. His 'Sītā Haraṇa'[8] (1876) which has a prelude and five acts, relates the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa. The themes of 'Rukmiṇī Haraṇa'[9] (1876) and 'Kansa Vadha'[10]

1. अमर सिंह राठौर. 2. तन मन धन गोसाईं जी के अर्पण. 3. भंग तरंग. 4. बूढ़े मुंह मुहासे. 5. भारत-दुर्दशा. 6. कलि-कौतुक रूपक. 7. हठी हमीर. 8. सीता-हरण. 9. रुक्मिणी-हरण. 10. कंस-वध

Kṛṣṇa's help of Rukmiṇī in the latter's hour of need. 'Anat Gangavali' (1890) has seven scenes. The theme is historical and is related to the reign of Aurangzeb. Gangavali, the heroine is carried away forcibly by Prince Ashraf. The Hindu public appeals to the Emperor for her release. Getting disappointed the masses rise in revolt and Ashraf is murdered. In the end Gangavali also commits suicide in order to put a stop to unnecessary bloodshed on both sides. The play is impressive, and the language and sentiments have been properly handled by the author.

'Amara Siṁha Rāṭhaura' (1884) is again a historical play, replete with the heroic sentiment. It has fifteen scenes, and deals with the exploits of Amara Siṁha, son of Raja Gaja Siṁha of Jodhpur, his heroic deeds and ultimate death. ~~Thisxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

'Tana Mana Dhana Gosain Ji Ke Arpana' 'Bhaṇḍa Parahāsa' and 'Uṭhā Muhaṭ' etc. are farces and have been discussed under that head in chapter VI.

Pratāpa Nārāyaṇa Miśra's 'Bhārata Durdaśā' (1902) has three acts, and the work is mostly an imitation of Bhāratendu's 'Bhārata Durdaśā'. His 'Kali Kautuka Rūpaka' (1886) has the benedictory stanza, no prelude and four scenes. The play reflects the evil consequences of drinking and adultery, and refers to the immoral lives of Sādhus and vices prevalent in families and monasteries.

'Hathī Hammīra' is a historical play written by the same author. It refers to the battle between Alāuddīn and Hammīra, which took place as a result of the latter's giving shelter to a Muhammadan who was an enemy of the former.

In addition to these, Pratāpa Nārāyaṇa Miśra has written a few farces, which we shall discuss a little later.

Pratāpa Nārāyaṇa, in these plays gives sufficient proof of his abilities, poetic skill and refined humour. He makes frequent use of proverbs and popular sayings, which impart life to his language.

Devakī Nandana Tripāṭhī wrote several minor plays. His 'Sītā Haraṇa' (1876) which has a prelude and five acts, relates the incidents of ... The theme of 'Rukmiṇī Haraṇa' (1878) ...

(1879), have been gathered from the life of Kṛṣṇa. 'Nandotsava' (1880)[1] describes the birth of Kṛṣṇa and has four acts without any prelude. Nanda, Yaśodā and Rukmiṇī speak in 'Khaṛī Bolī' while the cowherds use Braja Bhāṣā. His 'Bāla-Vivāha Nāṭaka'[2] (1881) with its theme of child marriage has three acts, further divided into scenes. The theme of 'Pracaṇḍa Gorakṣaṇa' (1881), is the problem of cow-slaughter. The quarrel between the Hindus and the Muslims on this issue takes them to the court, where the judgment is given in favour of the Hindus.

Devakī Nandana wrote 'Lakshmī Sarasvatī Milana Nāṭaka' (1881) and 'Go-Vadha-niṣedha Nāṭaka'[3] (1881), both these plays are of very ordinary merit.

Śāligrāma (literary career 1850-1880) has written several plays, all of which are of a very ordinary merit. The author gives evidence of no artistic skill or dramatic talent. Even his language is incorrect at so many places. His 'Abhi-Manyu Vadha' (1896) which would have been better styled as 'Jayadratha Vadha', lacks all force, although the theme is thoroughly heroic. In 'Puru-Vikrama' the battle between Alexander and Porus is given a dramatic form, but the playwright's knowledge of history seems to be very poor and unsound.

'Mayūra-dhvaja'[4] (1890) is based on the well known mythological story of Raja Moradhwaja. Raja's son carries away the horse of Yudhisthira Horse-sacrifice, and defeats the Pandava army, including Arjuna. Then Kṛṣṇa approaches the king with a hard trial, but the righteous king succeeds in that trial. With Kṛṣṇa's mediation both the hostile parties join hands in friendship.

The author's other plays are 'Mādhavānala-Kāma Kandalā'[5] 'Lāvaṇya-vatī' (1892) and 'Arjuna-Mada-Mardana'

Ambikā Datta Vyāsa has written several plays of which three or four deserve a mention. In 'Bhārata Saubhāgya' (1877), the author has sought to eulogize British rule in India. 'Gosaṅkaṭa Nāṭaka' (1886) refers to the agitation of the Hindus over the question of cow-slaughter, which is accordingly banned by Akbar. 'Lalitā Nāṭikā' (1883) is a small play in four acts. It is written in Braja Bhāṣā, and seems to have been produced for the purpose of Rasa-līla. Vyāsa also wrote 'Mana kī Umaṅga' (1886) which

1. नन्दोत्सव 2. बाल-विवाह नाटक. 3. गोवध निषेध नाटक. 4. मयूर-ध्वज. 5. माधवानल-कामकन्दला।

is a very minor play: he also translated Bhatta Nārāyana's 'Venī Samhāra'.

Lālā Khadga- Bahādura-Malla, the founder of the well-known Khadga Vilāsa Press, Bankipore (Patna) has also written a few ordinary plays. His 'Ratī-Kusumā-Yudha'[1] (1885) is a romantic drama consisting of five scenes. The theme of 'Mahārāsa'[2] (1885), has been taken from the Bhāgvata Purāna (Chapter 29-32), it is again a romantic play, in which the amorous sentiment prevails. It begins with the classical Nāndī and Prastāvanā, and has four acts. 'Hara-Tālikā' (1887), deals with a fast of Parvati, and has four scenes. The theme of 'Kalpa- Vrksa' (1887), is based on Chapters 117-128 of Harivamśa. It has four acts, and the amorous, the heroic, the terrible and the marvellous sentiments have been huddled together.

In 'Prabhāsa-Milana' (1903), Baldev Prasad Misra describes in a very interesting and emotional way, the chance-meeting between Krsna, and Nanda and Yaśodā after a long separation. 'Mīrā Bāī'[3] (1897) deals with the popular story of that famous Rajput princess, who was a deep devotee of Krsna.

'Vivāha-Vidambana' (1900) of Totā Rāma throws light on the evils of child-marriage, and extravagant waste of money on the occasion of marriages. In conformity with the Western practice, the play has no Nāndī, no Prastāvanā and has only four acts. Low characters and women speak Braja Bhāsā, while others use 'Khari Boli'.

Krsna-deva-Śarana-Sinha-'Gopa' translated Bharatendu's 'Śrī Candrāvalī' into Braja Bhāsā. In imitation of the same play he wrote 'Mādhurī Rūpaka', which was taken, for a long time, to be the work of Bharatendu. In this play separation smitten Mādhurī describes her lot, in separation from Krsna, to her friends. While Candrāvalī is united with her lord in the end, Mādhurī simply falls down senseless and the play ends without any union. 'Mādhurī' is much inferior to 'Śrī Candrāvalī' as a piece of art.

'Jānakī-Mangala'[4] of 'Sitala Prasad' is suited for stage purposes and has been played a number of times. It is said that one character did not turn up at the last moment: at that time Bharatendu quickly remembered his part and nicely played the role of that character.

'Madana-Mañjarī'[5] (1884) of Amana Sinha is a romantic drama. Mañjarī and Madana fall in love and exchange letters, but the young man is

1. रति-कुसुमायुध 2. महारास 3. मीराबाई 4. जानकी-मंगल 5. मदन-मंजरी

imprisoned by the maiden's father. Hero's father attacks the capital of girl's father, rescues his son, and the lover and beloved are happily married. This play has been written in the fashion of Bharatendu's Vidyā-Sundara, and it quotes many verses from that play.

Dāmodara Śāstrī wrote 'Rāma Līlā' (Circa 1889) a very lengthy play embracing the whole plot of the Ramayana story. In spite of being a Maratha the author has written correct and polished Hindi. Besides, he wrote two more plays, viz. 'Bāla Khela' and 'Rādha Mādhava'.

Ratna Canda, an advocate of the Etawah High Court has written many plays, all of which are of little merit. Of these 'Nyāya Sabhā Nāṭaka'[1] (1892), 'Bhrama Jāluka'[2], 'Prapañca Nāṭaka'[3], and 'Hindi-Urdu Nāṭaka' (1890) may be mentioned.

Jwālā Prasād Miśra wrote 'Sītā-Vana-Vāsa Nāṭaka'[4] (1895) and translated 'Venī Saṃhāra' and the 'Śakuntalā'.

Sudarśanācārya, a Punjabi playwright (born at Jagraon 1870 A.D.), wrote a huge play 'Anargha-Nala'[5] (1908). It has ten acts, and it deals with the story of Damayanti's marriage with Nala, their subsequent exile, separation and reunion. Several Sanskrit 'Ślokas' have been spread here and there, and the language of the prose is 'Khari Boli'.

In addition to the plays mentioned above, numerous other plays were written by various dramatists. But they are too minor to deserve a mention here.

All these play disclose little or more influence of the Parsi theatre. Their writers were careful towards the entertainment of the people alongside of their spirit of patriotism and social reform. They produced plays which aimed at the uplift of the country and religious, integrity, but which, at the same time, had the entertainment of 'Inder Sabhā', 'Gul Bakāvali' and Laila Majnū'. While their aim was patriotic, they also kept in view the Parsi stage and the low taste of the people in general.

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1. न्यायसभा नाटक. 2. भ्रम जालक 3. प्रपञ्च नाटक. 4. सीतावनवास नाटक. 5. अनर्घ नल

Chapter VI

OTHER PLAYWRIGHTS OF THE NINTEENTH CENTURY (contd.)

(a) Farces and Satires.

The Humorous is one of the nine chief sentiments of Sanskrit drama. Of the ten varieties of Rūpaka, 'Prahasana' is thoroughly dominated with humour. But while the aim of Sanskrit Prahasana was simply to produce humour and elicit laughter, the Hindi farce aims at sairising the contemporary social, religious and political evils, in addition to their humorous effect. In this our Hindi farce is indebted to the West, and it was in imitation of the Western farces that our playwrights started the practice of crticising the social and religious evils of the day.

In Hindi it was Bharatendu who set the ball rolling by writing his 'Vaidikī Himsā' in 1873 and then 'Andhera Nagarī' in 1881. Both these farces have been dealt with earlier.

After Bharatendu, farce became very popular in Hindi literature. To some extent it surpassed even the serious drama in attracting the people, and gradually, its field became more vast too. Evil practices and medieval customs like polygamy, child-marriage, drinking, meat-eating, illiteracy, adultery, indifference towards the wedded wives and attachment to the prostitutes, soon attracted the attention of contemporary writers. Baneful effect of English education and blind imitation of the Western civilization and fashions also became the target of the satirist. Religious superstitious, blind faith in Gurus, hypocrisy of the Pandits and Sādhus, their selfish ends and immoral pursuits also could not escape the critism of the satirical playwrights, who strongly renounced these evils and revolted against these unhealthy and disgraceful practices.

In 1877 Bala-Krsna Bhatta wrote 'Śiksādāna'[1] or 'Jaisā Kāma Vaisā Parināma'. In this farce Bhatta has, in an effective style, emphasized

the consequences of indulging in wine and wanton women. Thereafter Hindi drama was flooded with farces. Devaki Nandana Tripathi, one of the most important farcical playwrights wrote the following satires—'Rakṣā-bandhana' (1878), 'Eka Eka Ke Tīna Tīna'[1] (1879), 'Strī Caritra' (1879), 'Vaiśyā-Vilāsa', 'Baila Chheh Tako Ko'[2], 'Jaya Nāra Sinha Kī'[3] (1883), 'Sainkade men dasa dasa'[4] and 'Kalajugī Janeū' (1886).

'Rakṣā-bandhana' points out the evils of drinking and prostitution 'Eka Eka Ke Tīna Tīna' describes the dishonesty of the borrowing persons; 'Vaiśyā Vilāsa' again deals with the vice of prostitution, while 'Strī Caritra' hints at the cleverness and cunning behaviour of woman kind. In 'Jaya Nāra Sinha Kī' it is described how parents lose their children's life by not resorting to the proper medicine and treatment in sickness, but by taking to foolish and superstitious methods of charms and incantations etc. His other farces also deal with similar social, religious and domestic vices.

Khadga Bahādura Malla wrote 'Bhārata Ārata' (1885) in four scenes. It dwells upon the defects of the courts, evils of drinking etc., and pleads loyalty towards the crown. In 'Būḍhe Munha Muhāse' (1887), the author Rādhā Caraṇa Goswāmī, shows how the people nearest to God are often farthest from the Church. Those hypocrites who pretend to be strictly religious outwardly, but are really given to sensuality, greed and attachment are the targets of author's irony in this farce. 'Tana Mana Dhana Gosāīn Jī Ke Arpana' (1890) is another very interesting farce by the aforesaid author. It has eight scenes and is written entirely in prose. In this work the author has sharply criticised those foolish husbands who put blind faith in corrupted Gurus, who, in return cleverly violate the modesty of their womenfolk.

In 'Caupaṭa Capeṭa'[5] (1891), Kishorīlāla Goswāmī also satirses the vices of drinking, gambling etc. Campaka-latā, the embodiment of nobility and virtue sets right Madana Mohana, a voluptuary, who tried to seduce her. In Kaliyugī Vivāha' Devaki Nandana Tiwari deprecates the practice of early marriage and singing vulgar songs on the occasion of marriage.

'Jaise Ko Taisā' of Gopāla Rāma Gahmarī is a sharp satire on the blunder of marriage in advanced age. 'Vaiśyā Nāṭaka' (1893) of Navala Sinha

1. एक एक के तीन तीन. 2. बैल छः टके को. 3. जय नारसिंह की. 4. सैंकड़े में दस दस. 5. चौपट चपेट

brings to light the selfish and humiliating treatment of prostitues and their immoral atmosphere.

Besides, Vijayā Nanda Tripāṭhī wrote 'Maha Andhera Nagarī' (1892) and Devadatta Sharma wrote 'Ati Andhera Nagarī' (1895) both of which are imitations of Bharatendu's 'Andhera Nagarī'. In addition to these, a few other farces were written by minor playwrights.

So we find that, once inaugurated by Bharatendu, farce became very popular in Hindi literature. Although the Hindi writers borrowed this form from the West, yet they often resorted to ridiculing the Western civilization and exalting indgenous culture. But one thing needs be emphasized about these farces; they are wholly inartistic; their humour is of a low type and often vulgar. Their satire lacks force and is life-less. Their jokes are unnatural and improbable, and in order to elicit laughter they resort to gross improbabilities and inconsitencies of characterisation.

The three outstanding writers in the domain of farce are Bharatendu, Devaki Nandana Tripathi and Bāla Kṛṣṇa Bhatta. The humour of three writers and to some extent of Rādhā Caraṇa Goswāmī, is of a high standard, and their irony is sharp and forceful. In the case of others, their attempts are verily disappointing and disgusting. Their humour is forced and artificial. They have no scruples about vulgarity and indecent talk. Mostly it is the prostitute, wine, dice, the hypocritical Sadhu, the minor bride or bridegroom, the miserly millionaire etc. that are made the target of their satire. Even here their satire is not penetrating and effective. The only consolation can be found in thefact that these writers were the earliest playwrights who tried their hand at farce in imitation of the West, and moreover they lived ina society which was groaning under the unhealthy influence of these vices and evils.

(b) Translations.

Towards the middle of the ninteenth century, the Western scholars commenced a careful and critical study of Sanskrit literature, introduced it in England and other European countries and translated the works (especially plays) of the celebrated authors into western languages. Sir William Jones took the lead by translating Kalidasa's 'Śakuntalā'. Monier

Williams, Roth, Wilson, Prinsep, Max Muller, Bohtlingk, Macdonell and others, soon followed. Goethe loftily praised Kalidasa's 'Śakuntalā'. Although the efforts of these great scholars succeded in giving Sanskrit its due place in the West, still the Indians were too slow to realise the worth of their ancient literature. In imitation of these Western enterprises, solitary works of Sanskrit began to be translated by Indian scholars too.

But the real wave of translations came as a result of the wide awakening of our countrymen, which was brought about by the most commendable and untiring efforts of Swami Dayanand, the great founder of the Arya Samaj. The enlightening lectures and discussions of Swami Dayanand brought home to the Indians their past glory, which they had totally forgotten. The authority of the Vedas was once again restored and people once again began to take pride in their past glory, and interest in their past history and literature.

In Bengal the study of Sanskrit literature began in 1857, and Kalidasa's 'Śakuntalā' was staged the same year. Next year 'Ratnāvalī' was also staged, and translations of Sanskrit works quickly began to appear in Bengali. In Hindi, the first attempt was made by Rājā Lakṣmaṇa Sinha, who produced the Hindi translation of 'Śakuntalā' in 1861. In his first attempt, Raja Sahib translated even the original verse in prose, but in the edition published in 1889, he replaced Hindi verse for the original verse. Earlier, a few writers had tried to translate some Sanskrit plays, and some of them translated 'Prabodha Candrodaya'. But these attempts, as we have shown in Chapter III were nothing more than versified dialogues and were no genuine translations.

Bharatendu ranks next in the list of translators. He translated 'Ratnāvalī' which was left incomplete. Next he translated 'Vidyā-Sundara' 'Pākhaṇḍa-Viḍambana', 'Dhanañjaya-Vijaya', 'Karpūra-Mañjarī' and 'Mudrā-Rākṣasa' Devadatta Tiwārī translated Bhavbhūti's 'Uttara-rāma carita' (1871) Nandalāla Viśvanātha translated 'Uttara-rāma-carita' again (1886) and 'Śakuntalā' (1888); Rameśwara Bhaṭṭa translated Harṣa's Ratnāvalī (1895); Bāla-Mukunda Gupta completed Bharatendu's translation of Ratnāvalī (1898; published 1902); Jwālā Prasāda Miśra translated 'Veṇī Saṃhāra(1898) and

'Śakuntalā'; Śītalāprasāda translated 'Prabodha Candrodaya'; 'Mṛcchakaṭika' of Śūdraka was translated by several writers, including Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa, and Dāmodara Śāstrī.

Rai Bahadur L. Sita Ram B.A. translated numerous Sanskrit plays as also those of Shakespeare. He translated Bhavabhūti's 'Mahā-Vīra-carita' (1897), his 'Uttararāma-carita' (1897) and his 'Mālati-Mādhava' (1898); he also translated Kalidasa's 'Mālavikāgnimitra' (1898), Mṛcchakaṭika (1899) and Harṣa's 'Nāganānda' (1900). In addition to these translations, a few minor and anonymous writers also produced translations of some Sanskrit plays.

Some of these translations are literal and faithful, while most of them are free and independent translations. The translators have introduced, here and there, such minor changes as do not effect the main plot of the play. The purpose of these translators was not to parade their power of playwriting; they just meant to put before those Indians, who could not read or follow Sanskrit, the immortal productions of the Sanskrit dramatists. Most of these translations are quite beautiful and they retain the sense, force and fun of the original to a great extent.

So we find that Hindi scholars were greatly attracted towards Sanskrit literature, and they tried to enrich their literature as much as possible from that source. But that was not the only source they tapped. In Bengal, drama had risen a little earlier, perhaps because the British settled there a little earlier than in the Hindi area. Soon after the death of Bharatendu and some of his celebrated contemporaries, the cheap Parsi plays began to gain more and more ground in Hindi literature; while the masses ran amuck after these vulgar, inartistic plays, the cultured scholars greatly disliked and hated them. Instead of falling in line with the cheap playwrights, these learned scholars thought it better to translat some leading works from Bengali; and to place them before the uneducated masses. Consequently Rāma Kṛṣṇa Varma translated Padmāvatī of Rāja Kishore De (1889), Vīra Nārī of Dvārikā Nātha Gangūli (1889) and Kṛṣṇā Kumārī of Michael Madhusudana Dutta (1899).

The theme of Kṛṣṇā Kumārī is the sacrifice of a young Rajput princess who commits sucide in order to save her father's kingdom. The rulers of

Jodhpur and Jaipur simultaneously apply for the hand of Kṛṣṇā Kumārī, the princess of Mewār. Both advance a threat that the refusal of their request would mean war. The poor father of the girl is in a dilemma; he does not know which way to decide. Atlast the princess, the bone of contention, relieves him of the dilemma by herself putting an end to her life.

'Padmāvatī' deals with the love-story of King Indra-Nīla and Padmāvatī. The inclusion of Nārada and the nymphs in the list of characters gives a mythological touch to the play. The theme of 'Vīra Nārī' is the tragic fall of Sindh to the Arabs, and the death of King Dāhara. After her husband's death, the queen heroically fights with the foe, but being outnumbered and overpowered, she performs 'Jauhar' ceremony along with other Kṣatriya women.

Varma has achieved great success in these translations, and his language is high flown and polished.

Bāla-Kṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa also translated 'Padmāvatī' and 'Śarmiṣṭhā' from Bengali. Munshi Udita-Nārāyaṇa-Lāla translated 'Satī Nāṭaka' (1889), 'Dīpa-Nirvāṇa' and 'Aśrumatī Nāṭaka' (1895). In 1888 Pandit Braj Nath translated Michel Madhusudan Datta's 'Eki Ki Bole Sabhyatā' (Is this called civilization ?) In this farce, the author satirises the evil consequences of English education.

In addition to these translations, Keshava-Rama Bhatta translated two more plays from Bengali; they are not exactly translations; rather they can be called adaptations or reflections of Bengali originals in Hindi. In 1877 he produced 'Sajjad Sumbul' which is based on Bengali 'Sarat Aur Sarojinī', in 1880 he wrote 'Shamshad Susana' which is an adaptation of 'Surendra Vinodinī'. The plot of both the plays is romantic, and the characters are all Muslims. Consequently, the language is stuffed with hard Urdu words and phrases, but it is very brisk and forceful at the same time.

In 'Sajjad Sumbul' there are six acts and twenty-seven scenes. In addition to the love-intrigues, the occasional humorous touches produce the light effect. The play seems to be an alteration from some original novel, as the excess and violence of action could have fitted more in a novel. Sumbul, the heroine, helpless and orphan seeks shelter with Sajjad,

the hero, and incidentally they fall in love with each other. Sajjad's sister Gulshan catches fancy for Abbas, who is again residing at Sajjad's house. The story turns through winding and baffling intrigues, and in the end, the pining lovers are coupled together.

'Shamshad Sausan' has four acts with seventeen scenes. In all it has seven characters, five males and two females. The main theme is the love-story of Shamshad and Sausan. Rao Sahib, the Joint Magistrate is representative of the British bureaucratic rule in India, and he pays for his haughtiness, insolence and voluptuous habits. Shamshad is a bold, well-mannered and patriotic youth, and his character informs us of the political and social awakening of those days. The play ends happily, as the lovers meet together.

These translations of Bengali dramas did not produce any potent effect on Hindi drama. The only impression they left on Hindi drama was a slight touch of modernism, which the Bengali drama had developed through its contact with the West.

Besides Sanskrit and Bengali drama, the English drama too was not neglected by Hindi scholars and playwrights. They tried to draw the best out of English drama also, as they did, to a great extent, from Sanskrit drama and to some extent from Bengali drama. Moreover, English became the court language during British regime, and English dramas were prescribed for different school and college classes. As they had ample affinity with the classical Indian drama, Shakespeare's plays soon became very popular among the cultured classes.

In 1879, Tota Ram Varma translated Joseph Addison's play 'Cato' under the title 'Keto Kṛttānta Nāṭaka'. This was the earliest Hindi translation of any Western drama. Cato, a pious citizen of Rome prefers death to seeking shelter under Caesar, the enemy of his land. There are five acts in this drama, and the language is 'Kharī Bolī' with an admixture of Braja Bhāṣā words. The original names have been retained in the translation, as is obvious from the very title of the play.

Shakespeare's 'Comedy of Errors' was translated under the title 'Bhrama-Jālaka' by Ratna Candra of Etawah in 1879. The translator has very nicely infused Indian atmosphere in this English drama. English names

titles and places have all been changed. Necessary changes have also been made in Western customs, fashions and practices in order to make them suited to Indian atmosphere and surroundings.

In 1880 Bharatendu translated Shakespeare's 'Merchant of Venice' under the heading 'Durlabha Bandhu'. The translator has not tempered with the plot of the original play, but has changed the English names of persons and places to appropriate Indian ones. Shakespeare's Antonio becomes Ananta in the translation, Basanio is renamed Basant, Portia changes to Puraśrī, Shylock to Sailākṣa and so on. The Aryas and the Jains assume the roles of Christians and Jews respectively.

As compared with Ratna-Canda, Bharatendu does not appear to have attained much success in the translation. Bharatendu's translation is neither strictly literal, nor entirely independent. He has retained the original plot, with the Western atmosphere and customs, but have changed the names. This is his greatest fault, as it produces inconsistency in his translation. The atmosphere cannot become Indian by merely changing the names of places and characters. It would have been wiser and better to retain the original names also, if the atmosphere was not to be Indianised.

According to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇadāsa, Bharatendu left the translation of 'Merchant of Venice' incomplete like that of Ratnāvalī. It is just possible that the above faults are to be attributed to the writer who completed the translation, although we do not know his name.

In 1888 Āryā, a lady writer of Jubbulpore translated the above play, and named it 'Venice Ka Vyāpārī'. Its introduction was written by Edwin Arnold.

Purohit Gopinath of Jaipur translated 'As You Like It' (1896) under the title 'Mana Bhāwan', and 'Romeo and Juliet' under the heading 'Prema Līlā' (1897). These translations are all prose, and the original verse is not rendered into verse. Still, they are very good translations, as they retain the sense and strength of the original.

In 1893 Mathurā Prasāda Upādhyāya wrote his 'Sahasendra Sahasa' which is a translation of Shakespeare's 'Macbeth. He has given Indian

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touch to the whole story, and his translation is, therefore, free from all inconsistencies, of atmosphere and surroundings.

R.B. Lala Sita Ram also translated about a dozen important plays. They have been dealt with in a succeeding chapter.

Chapter VII

DRAMA OF THE PARSI THEATRES.

The dramas of Bharatendu-school were written with a spirit of reaction against the cheap, vulgar plays of the Parsi theatres. But since the common people liked the Parsi dramas very much, the plays of Bharatendu school which aimed more at art, elevation and purity than entertainment failed to enlist the popular support. Consequently, a limited number of people, who were learned, cultured and disgusted with the Parsi Art, patronized and played these dramas. These dramatists too were opposed simply to the vulgarity and rudeness of the Parsi dramas, and not to the Parsi theatres on the whole. That is why they adopted the stage of the Parsi theatres, and some of their plays have reflections of the Parsi theatrical art.

The English people had settled in big cities like Calcutta and Bombay long before the middle of the ninteenth century. For their entertainment, they had established their own theatres, where they used to stage leading English plays (especially those of Shakespeare) and later, also the translations of 'Śakuntalā' and other famous classical dramas. The Parsis and Hindus who loved art and possessed an aesthatic taste, were naturally influenced by these performances of Western dramas and farces. So, in imitation of these amateur (and sometimes professional) companies of the English people, the Parsis first of all established their Theatrical Companies in Bombay. Although in the beginning the aim of these Parsi companies was aesthetic and artistic, still, very soon they changed their mind to financial ends. They turned their theatrical companies into good sources of making fortune, and gradually they establish -ed their theatres in big cities all over India. Even in smaller cities their touring companies bore the torch of dramatic performances, though of a very inartistic nature.

The first company of this kind was 'The Original Theatrical Company' founded in 1870. It was followed by a rapid rush of other companies, which rose to avail of the deteriorating taste of the people in making lot of money. As these Parsi Companies had been inspired by the private English theatres in India, they adopted the Shakespearan stage which was being used in those English theatres. They modified that stage, however, according to Indian atmosphere and requirements.

The first specimen of this nature was 'Indar Sabha', an opera written by Amanat Khan, a courtier of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Avadh. This play was staged at Lucknow in which the Nawab himself took part. The same year (1853) Indar Sabha was staged in Bombay, and it became extremely popular with the common people. Several other plays like 'Muchandar Sabha','Bandar Sabha' etc. were soon written after the style of 'Indar Sabha'.

When these theatrical companies of the Parsis began to make big fortunes, several Hindus and Mohammadans were tempted to start their own companies. They, therefore, established numerous theatrical companies, like 'The Victoria Theatrical Company', 'The Indian Imperial Theatrical Company', 'Lightning Theatrical Company' etc. which were owned by non-Parsis but whose technique, taste and tendencies were exactly like those of the Parsi companies. Each company had its own paid playwright. These playwrights not only wrote plays for these theatres, but often participated in the performances. There were fully aware of the stage requirements, and always wrote plays that were suited to the stage.

As these theatrical companies kept the financial end in view, they provided the public with utmost entertainment. They did their best to cater to the popular taste, which, unfortunately was very rude, vulgar, uncouth and rustic in the ninteenth century. They never tried to educate the low liking of the people, or to refine their aesthetic sense. They borrowed their plot from Persian fables and love-stories (e.g. 'Ali Baba', Laila Majnu, Shirin Farhad' etc.) interesting episodes of the Puranas (e.g. Hariś-Candra','Satī Sāvitrī' etc.) romantic tales of English literature (Romeo and Juliet) and popular Indian themes (e.g. 'Puran Bhakta', 'Gopi Chand' etc.).

The atmosphere of these plays used to be of frivolity, flirtation

and vulgarity. The love they represented was mostly wanton, uncivil and rustic, worthy not of maidens but of prostitutes. Their humour rose from the cheap buffoonery of the clowns and was marked by vulgarity and obscenity. While in Sanskrit dramaturgy greatest attention was paid to 'Rasa' or the sentiment, these Parsi plays, in imitation of the drama of the West, attached greatest importance to story interest. Variety of the plot was a characteristic feature of Parsi theatrical plays. These plays mostly lacked well-knit and properly constructed plot; they were wanting in the beauties of characterisation, and forceful and realistic dialogue. Their dialogue used to be bombastic, their conversation unreal and heated and they suffered from the flaws of over-acting. It was Urdu that was mostly used in these plays, and occasionally hard Perso- Arabic words and phrases, titles and epithets were hurled in the course of conversation.

The chief aim of the Parsi Theatrical Companies was to provide the masses with utmost entertainment. Therefore their plays, though rude and undramatic, became very popular. Their popularity led some Hindi playwrights also to write dramas of the Parsi style in Hindi. In 1889 'Hariścandra Nataka' was written by Chuni Lal of Mathura. As in Parsi theatrical cal dramas, the conversation in this play was also conducted in verse. In 1890 two more plays 'Hariścandra' and 'Rama-Lila were written after the style of the Parsi theatre. In 1892 Mathura Dasa wrote his 'Candrāvali Nataka'. Several other plays followed in the train. In all these plays the essential features of Parsi theatrical plays were present. More emphasis was laid on hilarious movements and gestures, cheap songs, melodramatic situations, than on characterisation and plot construction. The heroes and heroines of these dramas would readily stoop down to to the level of ~~xxxxx~~ ~~xxxxx~~ sensual, indiscreet and ever-ready lovers. Even the great mythological characters, and heroes and heroines of the epics talk in no better a way.

In fact, to a man of highly cultured and really aesthetic taste, the entire atmosphere of these plays seemed distasteful and degrading.

In early twentieth century these Parsi theatres began to show some signs of improvement. First of all they overhauled their language. So far, Urdu was predominant on the Parsi stage. 'Narayan Prasad Betab' was the first playwright (of the Parsi theatre) who used simple Hindustani in his plays; he wrote his songs also in simple

Hindi. This adoption of simple Hindustani widened the circle of these plays. More public began to take interest in them, and more playwrights were drawn towards them. Mythological themes became more frequent than the Persian themes. 'Radha Shyām Kathā-Vāchak', Krishna Candra Zeba, 'Tulsi Datt Saida', Agha Hashra Kashmiri' 'Hari Krishna Jauhar', Narayana Prasada Betab' and other celebrated writers offered their servises to this type of theatre.

Soon the bioscope and the 'movies' made their appearance in India, and the masses were greatly drawn towards them. The sensational melodrama-tic scenes and superior humour, captivating scenery and wonderful make-up of the stars produced deep effect on the mind of the spectators, and they now turned from the Parsi theatre to the bioscope. In order to fare well in the competition, the Parsi theatres also introduced those very elements in their dramas, which were making the movies more popular. Highly melo-dramatic scenes began to frequent their plays, as we find in 'Bhārat - Darpan' of Krishna Candra Zeba —

(शङ्ख — दृश्यपरिवर्तन — एक बड़ा सा चर्खा दृष्टिगोचर होता है, चर्खा कठिन कृपाण के रूप में परिवर्तित हो जाता है। तलवार पर 'राष्ट्रीयखड्ग' (कौमी तलवार) यह शब्द अंकित है। एक शङ्ख होता है और योरोपीय व्यापार एक राक्षस के रूप में प्रकट होता है। पुनः शङ्ख होता है और भारत माता प्रवेश करती है। माता चर्खा के समान आकार वाले उसी कठिन कृपाण को लेकर तीव्र गति से राक्षस को दिखाती है। योरोपीय व्यापार - नामधारी राक्षस का हृदय भयभीत और शरीर कम्पित हो जाता है।)

Although Hindi playwrights (of the Parsi theatres) could not provide the people with as beautiful and effective scenes as the cinema gave them, still they tried to introduce many scenes planned on that model In addition to sensational scenes and bewitching scenery, these plays breathed an air of frivolity, restlessness and sensuality. This feature of cheap and quick love they borrowed from Urdu as also from 'Rīti-Kāvya'. And the people really went mad after such cheap tactics of these plays.

Another outstanding feature of the twentieth century (Parsi) theatre was its novel introduction of the comic element. While occasional, obscene and vulgar touches of humour were found in the nineteenth century, a better adjustment was given to the humorous in the twentieth century. According to the new scheme, the playwrights began to introduce two independent plot in their dramas. Both these plots ran side by side, one of them being

Hindi. This adoption of simple Hindustani widened the circle of these plays. More public began to take interest in them, and more playwrights were drawn towards them. Mythological themes became more frequent than the Persian themes. 'Radhe Shyam Katha-Vachak', Krishna Candra Zeba, 'Tulsi Datt Saida', Agha Hashra Kashmiri' 'Hari Krishna Jauhar', Narayan Prasada Betab' and other celebrated writers offered their services to this type of theatre.

Soon the bioscope and the 'movies' made their appearance in India. And the masses were greatly drawn towards them. The sensational melodramatic scenes and superior humour, captivating scenery and wonderful make-up of the stage produced deep effect on the mind of the spectators, and they now turned from the Parsi theatre to the bioscope. In order to face the competition, the Parsi theatres also introduced those very elements in their dramas, which were making the movies more popular. Highly melodramatic scenes began to frequent their plays, as we find in 'Bhagwan Darpan' of Krishna Candra Zeba —

[illegible]

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serious and the other light and comic. Agha Hashra Kashmiri was probably the first playwright who introduced this scheme of double plot in his plays.

It was soon found that the majority of the spectators liked the comic plot more than the serious one. They would got to the theatre chiefly for the comic element of the drama, and often cursed the characters of the serious plot who stood in the way of their fun. So this practice of double plot soon became a rule and those playwrights who could not produce the comic part in their play had to introduce some short farce alongside of their serious plot. Jamuna Das Mehra in his popular 'Pāpa Pariṇāma' has said —

"प्रस्तुत पुस्तक में हमने उद्योग किया है कि दोनों ही कार्य रहें अर्थात् विषय सामाजिक, वर्तमान समय के उपयुक्त और उपदेश प्रद तथा चित्ताकर्षक हो, और जो सदा से पारसी कंपनियों के भक्त रहते आये हैं, वे भी इसे खेलें, सो उनका भी मनोरंजन हो। इस लिये इसमें स्थान स्थान पर पारसी कंपनियों के ढंग की शायरी तथा हास्य-कौतुक आदि भी दे दिया गया है।

In the end we can say that although these plays made themselves extremely popular among numberless spectators, yet none of them rose to be good or great from the point of view of art and finish. Their art was incoherant and chaotic. Their writers never realised the value of drama, nor did they ever keep any fundamentals of dramaturgy in view. Except making money, they had no better or higher motive behind their genius, if they at all possessed any. They would include all rot in their dramas that could attract the audience, and would never mind any restraint or control which is so essential for good dramatic production. They permitted a free flow to their emotions, however, irrelevant or unwarranted it may be.

Had the Parsi playwrights tried to copy the ideals of the playwrights of the Bharatendu-school to some extent, or had the latter playwrights ever cared to cater to the popular demand alongside of their high artistic ideal, the result would have been a splendid one. These latter playwrights, who had the proper insight into human life and character, and who possessed the genius of delineating the same into a vivid picture totally disregarded the popular taste. They were fired with the spirit of sublimation and reformation; they produced purely literary dramas which were very nice as closet plays (meant for private study alone) but which could be no success on the popular stage.

The Parsi playwights on the other hand lacked that sharp talent and genius which is so necessary for the keen observation of human life and character. Nor could they, therefore, succeed in portraying the same in their plays. Moreover, they were devoid of all sense of propriety and right direction. They could not, or perhaps they intentionally did not, discriminate between the principal scenes and the secondary ones. While they have given very little space to the important scenes, they have dealt with the minor scenes at great length.

Chapter VIII

THE DECLINE OF HINDI DRAMA.

Rightly speaking it was with Bharatendu that Hindi drama rose. It was he who, for the first time produced original Hindi dramas of high literary worth. But we have noticed that, although Hindi drama rose at a very belated time, yet it made very rapid progress after its rise. Bharatendu himself wrote so many plays of so many kinds (e.g. mythological, historical, socio-political and farces). And the dramatic tradition set up by him was promptly carried on by several other writers, and quite a rush of playwrights appeared soon after Bharatendu.

But as, in the days of Bharatendu, Hindi drama rose with a sudden speed, in a similar way it speedily declined after the death of that celebrated writer. In fact from 1885 to 1912 we come across hardly a single play that can claim a genuine appreciation. At best we find translations of beautiful Sanskrit, Bengali and English plays in Hindi. Referring to this decline of Hindi drama, Kishorī Lāla Goswāmī in his 'Caupaṭa Capeṭa' (1891) has said-

"हिन्दी के अभाग्यवश जब से भारतेन्दु बाबू हरिश्चन्द्र जी परलोक सिधारे हैं तब से साहित्य की बड़ी दुर्दशा हो रही है। गद्य तो जो है सो हई है पर पद्य की दशा ऐसी भयानक हो रही है कि देखते ही शरीर कांप उठता है बहुत से मूसीधिराज कविता का श्राद्ध करने पर उतारू भये हैं, अस्तु और नाटक-विद्या को तो कदाचित् बाबू साहब अपने संग ही ले गये हैं। उनके पीछे दो एक रूपक कि जिनसे घण्टा भर जी लगे, छोड़ के और आज तक कोई नाटक नहीं बने जिससे हिन्दी भाषा की पुष्टि होय, यह अभाग्य नहीं तो क्या है।"

In 'Mayaṅka- Mañjarī' (1891) the said author again deplores the decline of Hindi drama -

"... जिस देश में इस विद्या का प्रथम २ प्रचार भया, और संगीत-साहित्य परिपक्व हो कर पृथ्वी भर में व्याप गये, आज वहां के निवासी नाटक का नाम तक नहीं जानते, यदि है तो इन्द्र सभा पारसियों के शतरंजी मशाल वाले भ्रष्ट खेल ही पर नाटकों की इति श्री है, खेलना तो दूर रहे, जो नाटक रचै या अभिनय करे, वह हास्यास्पद गिना जाता है।"

It was in fact Bharatendu who was responsible for the rise of Hindi drama. Hindi drama might have taken longer to rise, had not the extraordinary genius of Bharatendu appeared at that time, and devoted itself ceaselessly to literary work. Bharatendu found that Hindi drama can only survive if it had a proper stage for its performance. For that purpose he borrowed the stage from the Parsi theatre and infused life into it by himself taking active part in the performance of plays.

But while Bharatendu was really great as a genius, playwright and actor, his successors, unfortunately happened to be very weak. With the exception of 'Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa', 'Rādhā Kṛṣṇadāsa' and one or two other play-wrights, none of the contemporaries or successors of Bharatendu was a man of strong calibre. And that was the most critical time when great playwrights were needed. We know that the Parsi theatres were getting extremely popular in the last quarter of the ninteenth century. Only Great writers and talented playwrights could have succeeded in competing well with these Parsi theatres, and bringing the audience back from those cheap theatres. Neither could the weak successors of Bharabendu produce high class dramas nor did they care to cater to the popular taste. Moreover the stage that was started by Bharabendu and was the life-blood of Hindi drama passed into oblivion under the successors of Bharatendu. They neither took much interest in it, nor strove to keep it alive. They devoted their attention simply to playwriting, not realising the fact that without the stage drama cannot prosper, cannot live for long.

The greatest blow to Hindi drama was really dealt by the Parsi theatres. Unfortunately the popular taste in the ninteenth century was unaesthetic, rude and vulgar. While the dramas of the Bharatendu school aimed only at art, elevation and purity, and tried to refine the vulgar taste of the people, the Parsi theatres provided them with utmost entertain-ment. They gave the audience all that they wanted, however vulgar and inartistic it might be. The atmosphere of the Parsi plays used to be frivolous and vulgar; their love was shameless and unmaidenly, their humour rose from buffoonery and obscenity and these plays abounded in sensational scenes, melodramatic situations and vulgar songs. However distasteful these things appeared to learned men of aesthetic taste, the general public was verily made after them. And these Parsi plays became

so popular among the common people that no audience was left for the literary drama of Hindi.

Not only that no audience was left for the literary drama. The playwrights themselves were struck by the dazzling success and roaring business of the Parsi theatres. Most of them, therefore, instead of boldly fighting the Parsi competition and strongly maintaing their literary style, dropped the idea of writing literary plays and began to write dramas of the style of Parsi theatres. Others, especially the budding playwrights, joined the Parsi theatres altogether. So, not only the audience gradually went on diminishing for the literary drama, the popularity of Parsi drama began to prevail even upon the playwrights themselves.

In the closing quarter of the ninteenth century a spirit of awakening swept through the whole of the country. Several social, political and religious evils (which formed the themes of most of the farces discussed in Chapter VI) began to attract the foremost attention of every learned man. The principles and preachings of the Indian National Congress and the Arya Samaj influenced every-body, especially the cultured class, who found the country groaning under the heavy burden of social, political and religious evils. Consequently, the playwrights, influenced by these movements as they were, tried to seek the remedy of those evils through the medium of drama. To them drama appeared to be the most effective instrument for getting rid of these evils and solving the political, economic and religious problems. So they stopped writing purely literary plays for the sake of art, and made it a means of propaganda and reform. The aim of these playwrights was patriotic and therefore commendable, but they lacked the genius that was essential for their task. Bharatendu, no doubt, had set the example of successfully dealing with the social, religious and political problems of the country in his dramas. But other playwrights, who followed his lead, essentially lacked that dramatic skill and keen sense of propriety, and so their works fell short of their aim. In this way neither they successfully led the cause of the country any further, nor they strengthened the literary drama which was already declining due to the lack of proper support and nourishment.

The movement of the Arya Samaj had its wholesome effect throughout the

country, especially the Northern India. It suggested a lot for fresh material that could nicely suit for the themes of dramas. But its style of putting that material before the people greatly effected the artistic tocuh of drama. Under the influence of the preachings of the Arya Samaj, the playwrights, fired by the same spirit of reformation and resettlement followed the style of discussion in their dramas. The playwrights did not evolve some finer and more artistic methods of preaching their doctrine and attacking the evils; rather they resorted to the plain and inartistic method of controversy and discussion. In their plays it seems that the playwright is openly preaching his doctrines, as if from the platform of the Arya Samaj through the agency of his characters.

Moreover, the contact with the West became more close and clear in these years. Mysteries of the West were disclosing themselves to the people day by day. Everyday, the people were learning something new, good or bad, from their contact with the West. And they were getting impatient to learn more. This rush of Western ideas, Western education culture and civilization resulted in a mental unrest and confusion of the people for some years. Their integrity were shaken, and it took them a number of years to settle down once again, after imbibing all they had learnt from the West, and accepting a combination of the Eastern and Western idealogies and cultures. They could not make any concentrated effort at literature, much less at drama, although stray pieces of art appeared from time to time.

And we find that once the people had over-come their mental confusion which resulted from their rapid contact with the West, they made a very successful and steady attempt at drama, and from 1912 onwards we find the branch of Hindi drama ever in bloom. So, due to these reasons, Hindi drama met a very rapid decline.

Chapter IX. TECHNIQUE OF NINTEENTH CENTURY DRAMA.

As we have already remarked (in Chapter IV), Bharatendu started his dramatic career with a firm resolve to introduce genuine dramatic art and restraint in Hindi drama. He was aware of the vulgar and uncultured taste of the people of his times. Having seen an ugly and inartistic performance of 'Sakuntala' at some Parsi theatre, he was disgusted and disappointed, and decided to revive the classical art. Accordingly, he carefully studied the leading treatises on Sanskrit dramatury and borrowed a lot from that art.

But it was not blindly that Bharatendu followed the ideals and traditions of classical dramaturgy. By his time close contract with the Western people and their culture and literature had been established. Naturally, Bharatendu and his contemporaries could not escape the sharp-spreading influence of Western education and culture; nor did they support the idea of banishing from their plays all that was alien. Wisely, he and his followers adopted a middle course between classical dramaturgy and Western technique. They accepted only those injunctions of Bharata which could suit the changed atmosphere, and which were not repulsive to the learned taste of their times. Alongside of this they also borrowed from the West all that was necessary, useful and in tune with the times.

So, broadly speaking, the technique of ninteenth century drama was fashioned after two different models, viz. the classical and the Western. A few of the plays betray some influence of medieval drama also, but that influence is neither abundant nor penetrating. The technique of Parsi dramas was based neither upon the classical nor the Western model. Their technique can be called the 'popular' technique in so far as it was in complete conformity with the popular demand and taste, which they best

tried to cater to. It was a haphazardous combination of the characteristics of Western drama, the classical drama as well as the medieval types of drama, and was marked by its lack of dramatic restraint, incoherence and vulgarity.

According to the rules of Sanskrit dramturgy, every drama should usually begin with the Nāndī or the 'Benedictory' verse, invoking the blessings and support of some popular deity. Ancient Indian masses as also the literary men believed in the significance, sanctity and strength of Dharma; so, in all matters, religious or secular, they looked upon it as their first and foremost duty to offer their salutations to God (or some beloved Deity) and pray for his blessings. But in the second half of the ninteenth century, God and religion (Dharma) were steadily retiring to the background, much under the influence of Western education and culture. Therefore in some of the dramas of this period the 'Benedictory stanza' stands in tact, while in others this injuction has been set aside. In Bharatendu's 'Satya-Hariś-candra,' 'Prema-Yoginī' 'Śrī-Candrāvalī', and in 'Mahārānā Pratāpa Sinha' and 'Padmāvatī' of Rādhā-Krsna-dāsa, in 'Taptā-Samvarana' of Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa and several other plays, Nāndī has been given. But in Bharatendu's 'Niladevī', in 'Dukhinī Bālā' and 'Satī Pratāpa' of Radha-Krsna-dasa, in 'Ranadhīra- Premamohinī' of Śri Niwasa Das in 'Sajjad Sumbul' and 'Shamshad Sausan' of Kesava Bhatta and several other plays the benedictory verse is missing.

After 'Nāndī' begins the 'Prastāvanā' or the prolgue. Than Nandi, Prastavana was a more significant part of the drama. The playwright introduced himself to the audience by means of this Prastavana; moreover, he made a reference to the plot in hand. In classical drama the greatest attention was paid to 'Rasa' or the sentiment, and not to the beauty of the plot or story-interest. In order to help the spectators in fully and readily relishing the unchecked flow of sentiment, it was essential that the theme of the play should be hinted at in the beginning.

But the conditions had changed in the late ninteenth century. Playwrights started the practice of writing 'Introductions' to their plays, in which reflections about the playwright and the plot were cast, whereever necessary. Also, with the introduction of lithographic press, Printing became very cheap. Hand-bills carrying the synopsis of the drama and

giving the name etc. of the play, the playwright and the characters, used to be distributed before and at the time of the performance. These served the purpose of classical Prastāvanā.

Moreover, the chief aim of drama, in this period, shifted from sentiment to story-interest. This rendered the Prastāvanā useless. The charm of the plot and story interest would be lost if the audience was given an inkling into it beforehand.

As in the case of Nandi, so in the case of Prastavana too we find that several plays begin with the Prastavana, while others have eliminated it, and begins straight away with the plot. We find Prastavana in Bharatendu's 'Satya Hariś-candra', 'Prema-Yoginī', 'Śrī Candravalī', Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Dasa's 'Mahārānā Pratāpa-Sinha', Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa's 'Samyogitā-Svayamvara' and several other plays: but we find it missing in Bharatendu's 'Niladevi' Śrī Niwasa Dasa's 'Ranadhira-Premamohini' etc.

According to classical rules, a play could have five to ten acts, the usual number being seven. 'Śakuntalā' 'Uttara-rāma-carita', 'Mudrā-rakṣasa'-- the three best plays of Sanskrit have seven acts each. 'Veni-Samhāra' has six, while 'Mṛcchakaṭika', being a Mahā-Nāṭaka has ten acts. In the period in question this rule about the number of acts has been mostly violated. We find hardly one or two plays of seven acts; otherwise the popular number was fixed at five in imitation of Shakespearean style. Some plays have four acts and a few only three acts each.

In Sanskrit dramas, acts were not divided into scenes: it was so because, their chief aim being sentiment, they had to maintain a permanent feeling and a prolonged atmosphere, and for this purpose quick transfer or scenes (or division of acts into scenes) was not helpful or possible. But in this period, the chief aim of the playwright being story-interest, the quick transfer of scenes became essential. So we find that almost every playwright has divided his acts into scene.

But here too this practice has not been followed by all the playwrights. Even in Bharatendu we find that while most of his plays exactly follow the classical practice and are not divided into scenes (e.g. 'Satya Hariś-candra', 'Śrī Candrāvalī', 'Bhārata Durdaśā), his 'Prema Yoginī' has has acts divided into scenes. Similarly in case of other playwrights, some

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of their dramas have subdivided the acts into scenes, while others have observed the classical rule. Contrary to classical canons, the farces of this period also have more than one act or scene.

The 'asides' and the 'soliloquies' are very common in these plays as they are in the classical drama. Often the soliloquies are very lengthy and on certain occasions they spoil the dramatic illusion and sound quite boring and monotonous. Even Bharatendu's plays are not exempted from this fault.

The dialogue is the most important factor of drama. It is the only instrument of character-painting, development of the plot and infusing life and force in the play. But the playwrights of the ninteenth century, most of them atleast, have shown no special skill or art in it, nor have they been able to make it forceful and lively. It seems as if they are ignorant of the significance and the appropriate use of dialogue. Their conversation is mostly unnatural, undramatic, useless and unreal. Sometimes their speeches are very lengthy; and others they have nothing to do with the main plot; sometimes they indulge in long conversation only for a little action. Seldom do these playwrights make use of this most effect-ive means for the purpose of portraying the character of the speakers. Their conversation sometimes borders on vulgarity, especially in the speeches of illiterate and uncultured characters. With the exception of some gifted playwrights like Bharatendu, Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa Rādhā Kṛṣṇa-dāsa etc. in the conversation of other dramatists, short, simple, significant, appropriate and active sentences are lacking altogether.

Another very important feature of the dialogues of this period is that verse is very frequent and abundant in them. It is true that the use of verse is common in all Sanskrit plays. But there the poetry is not merely verse; it is highly poetic and full of sentiment and significance. The use of verse in Sanskrit plays is very appropriate and artistic. But the Hindi playwrights resort to the use of verse on all occasions, which looks undramatic and a cheap tactic. It seems that they inherited this tendency not from classical drama but from Parsi drama instead. The Parsi plays abound in verse, although its use is often unnatural, ineffective and ridiculous. Even in the works of great playwrights like Bharatendu, verse has been freely used. But there it does not sound so inappropriate

and ridiculous as in the works of some of his followers. In addition to these verses, cheap songs and choruses have been introduced in these plays after the fashion of Parsi dramas.

Another important feature of the diction of these dramas is the use of different dialects by various characters, which gives a touch of realism to the drama. In Sanskrit drama the kings, the courtiers, commanders and ministers, Brahmanas and other educated males speak Sanskrit. The Brahmana or ascetic ladies and the educated harlots also converse, in Sanskrit. All other ladies including even the queens, low-class characters and even the Vidūṣaka (who is invariably a Brahmana) use different types of Prakrits. Parsi theatres did not observe any such differentiation of dialects, and all their characters, high and low, males and females. spoke one language—Hindustani, i.e. mixed Hindi and Urdu. But the literary playwrights of this period followed the example of classical drama, and so in many dramas of this period we find different characters speaking different languages and dialects. In 'Mahārāṇā Pratāpa Sinha' of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa-dāsa the Muslim characters speak Urdu, as —

अकबर — (रानी के पैरों पर गिर कर) मैं आपके इहसान से कभी सबुकदोश नहीं हो सकता। आपने न सिर्फ आज मेरी जां-बख़्शी की बल्कि बहुत बड़ा गुनाह से बचाया। मेरे ऊपर जैसे इतना करम हुआ यह भी वादा फरमाया जाये कि यह भेद किसी से ज़ाहिर न किया जाय और मेरा गुनाह मुआफ़ फरमाया जाय। (Act II, scene 3)

The Hindu characters speak Hindi as is clear from the conversation of Rana Pratapa and his comrades. And the Portugese character uses a strange mixture of Portugesed Hindi and Urdu, as —

पौर्तुगीज़ — "खोडावंद अम पोर्तुगीज़ हैं, अमारा नाम अगस्टाइन है। अमारा गोआ के गवर्नर ने अम को हजूर के लिये बहुत सा नज़र लेकर भेजा ठा, राह में उदयपुर के राजा ने अम को लूट लिया, बोला अमारे सिवाये बादशाह कौन है, यह नज़र अमारा है। (Act IV, Scene 3)

Or again in 'Ranadhira-Premamohini' of 'Sri Niwasadasa some characters use the local dialects —

नत्थूराम — (कुछ तेज होकर) अन्नदाता जी, या बात आपकी फ़ुर्माना लायक नहीं छै, गांव गोठांरा बोरा में कोई धरम हार इस्यो काम भला ही कर लो, म्हे लोग मरता मरजास्यां तो, पण म्हासे खोटे काग़द कदे नहीं बणायो जासी। (Act I, Scene 3)

Similarly in 'Prabhāsa Milan' of Baldeva Prasada Miśra, Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva, Nārada etc. speak in Khari Boli while Rādhā, Yashoda, cowherds and cowmaids talk in Braja Bhasa. But all the playwrights have not followed this scheme.

Again in classical dramaturgy, the demonstration of certain events and actions is banned for the stage. Scenes of battle, death, bathing, kissing, embracing etc. were prohinited. They seemed repulsive to the highly refined and delicate taste of the selected audience of those times. Most of the playwrights of the ninteenth century have not dared to go against these injunctions of classical dramaturgy. But in certain cases these taboos have been violated. For instance, in 'Mayaṅka-Mañjarī' of Kishori Lāla Goswami, we find the scenes of kissing and death, and again in Bhāratendu's murder of Ashraf Khan at the hands of Niladevi is shown on the stage.

Classical plays were all comedies as a rule. Hindu philosphy looks upon life essentially as a comedy; so the writing of tragedies was banned according to Bharata's rules of dramaturgy. But in the ninteenth century a few playwrights made bold to produce tragedies also. Perhaps they borrowed this conception of tragedy from the West, or their own experience of life. Bharatendu's 'Nīladevī' has a tragic ending and so also 'Ranadhīra-Premamohinī' of Śrī Niwāsa. But the number of these tragedies is very small when compared with the dramas with a happy ending.

Sanskrit plays used to be idealistic, poetic and sentimental. They had a strong ethical background; they always depicted the victory of the virtuous over the wicked. Their heroes are essentially ideal, flawless, infallible and invested with all human (and sometimes, even superhuman) virtues. They do not sublimate themselves from the ordinary human level to a super-human height. In the Hindi drama, all these things underwent a change, partly on account of the Western influence and partly due to the changed ethical and moral standard of the people. Excepting the mythological plays, the characters of other dramas began to be ordinary men of the world, liable to go wrong like other human beings. The atmosphere of the dramas became more realistic and worldly.

The theme of the classical plays used to be romantic, mythological or religious. Superhuman and super-natural element was present in most of them. In the ninteenth century, playwrights based their themes on all contemporary worldly topics. They began to write plays on political, social religious, historical and other popular topics. New types of plays like the operas ('Bharata-Jananī') the lyrical-dramas ('Nīla-devī' and 'Satī-Pratāpa

Again in classical dramaturgy, the demonstration of certain events and actions is banned for the stage. Scenes of battle, death, bathing, kissing, embracing etc. were prohibited. They seemed repulsive to the highly refined and delicate taste of the selected audience of those times. Most of the playwrights of the nineteenth century have not dared to go against these injunctions of classical dramaturgy. But in certain cases these taboos have been violated. For instance, in 'Mayanka-manjarī' of Kishorī Lāla Goswami, we find the scenes of kissing and death, and again in Bhā[illegible] endu's murder of Afzal Khan at the hands of Shivaji is shown on the st[age].

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and monodramas (Visasya-Visam Ausadham) began to be written. The farces (Prahasana) of this period made a long departure from the classical Prahasanas. According to the classical rules they should not deal with social or political topics, and should not carry the spirit of reformation, which the farces of this period positively do.

The classical 'Bharata Vākya' also dropped gradually out of use, although in many plays of this century it is given in the manner of classical dramas (e.g. in Satya-Hariścandra', Śrī Candrāvalī' etc.).

To recapitulate we can say that although our playwrights borrowed a lot from the Western art of drama, yet they did not at all look down upon the classical technique. They imported realism from the West, yet they retained their classical idealism and poetic atmosphere. Under the influence of Western art, they gradually bade good-bye to Nāndī, Prastāvanā and Bharata-Vākya, gave due place to plot-variety and story-interest, and divided their acts into scenes. But so far as idealism and poetic justice is concerned, they followed the classical drama. To take for instance, the conception of tragedy in classical drama, we find that Sanskrit drama does not admit of any tragedy. Consequently in Hindi too, which is a clear example of its profound and permanent classical influence, we find practically no dramas with a tragic ending. One or two tragic plays were no doubt written by some skilful writers, but their lead was not followed by other playwrights.

But we have also to admit that although classical influence is predominant in these plays, we cannot, at the same time, find perhpas a single play which is totally free from all non-classical effect. For instance, if Bharatendu's 'Śrī Candrāvalī' is a 'Nāṭikā' written in accordance with the classical canons, it has also a clear impression of Rasa-lila and the Parsi theatre. Incidentally, even the three Unities of the West are found observed in this play. Again we find that in the works of one and the same playwrights, the classical and the modern rules have been observed separately. If their theme is modern, their technique is classical, and if they follow the Western technique, their theme is classical. Thus in 'Mahārānā Pratāpa Simha' and 'Mahārānī Padmāvatī' of Rādha Krsnadāsa, the theme is historical and therefore contrary to classical practice,

but the technique followed in both the plays is mostly classical.

In short we can say that in the nineteenth century the techniques of Hindi drama was mostly classical, but it had undergone a few modification under the Western influence. These modifications gradually became more powerful and more numerous in the twentieth century, and today we find that Hindi drama is working mostly under the Western influence, although some inherent classical traits have been retained.

HINDI DRAMA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

Chapter X. HINDI DRAMA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

The First Phase: Translations.
(1900-1912)

After the death of Bharatendu Hindi Drama rapidly decayed. For this decline of Hindi drama several reasons can be brought forward, and most of them have been enumerated in Chapter VII. Chief in importance unquestionably was the profound influence of the Parsi theatre which dealt the greatest blow to Hindi drama. Unfortunately the popular taste in those days was so uncultured, rude and vulgar, and the Parsi theatre did its best in catering to that taste and providing the public with utmost entertainment, however vulgar and inartistic.

The Parsi theatre was popular not only during the second half of the ninteenth century, but also during the first quarter of the twentieth century too. The reasons that brought about the decay of Hindi drama in the closing quarter of the ninteenth century, were still in force during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In fact the sterile period of Hindi drama begins with the death of Bharatendu and continues upto 1912 (and even a few years later), the year in which the first high-class literary drama of the twentieth century, namely 'Karu-vana-dahana'[1] appeared. The literary dramas of Jaya Shankar Prasāda also began to appear the same year. During the sterile period, one does not come across a single literary drama of considerable merit. In all, hardly half a dozen attempts were made at original drama during this period, and even these productions claim no special mention as works of art.

All the same, this period, like the closing decade of the ninteenth century showed great progress in translations. Numerous beautiful dramas

1. करुणालय.

of Sanskrit, Bengali and English were translated into Hindi by learned writers. In this rush of translations, which began in the ninteenth century and continued well into the current century, the attention of playwrights was so much diverted from original compositions and they were so much led away by the charm of classical, Western and Bengali plays that not a single original drama of note appeared in this period.

Babu Gopal Ram Gahmari has written a large number of interesting detective novels. In addition to these novels, he wrote a few dramas as well. In 1912 he wrote 'Banbīra Nāṭaka' on the basis of a Bengali drama. The theme of this play is the great sacrifice of that Rajput nurse Pannā who saved the life of her baby-master Udaya Sinha from Rana Banbir Sinha, and sacrificed her own beloved son in his stead. In the play the comic has been mingled with the pathetic, the heroic and the dreadful sentiments, and this play bears testimony to the skill of Gahmari as a translator.

Rai Bahadur L. Sita Ram started his literary career during the life-time of Bharatendu. He has not written any original drama, but has contributed much to this side of literature by translating a good number of plays from Sanskrit and English. His translations of different sanskrit dramas have been referred to in Chapter VII. In addition to these, he translated eleven plays of Shakespeare into Hindi namely, 'As You Like It', 'Othello', 'Julius Caesar', 'Cymbeline', 'King Richard II', 'Tempest' 'King Lear', 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', 'Comedy of Errors' 'Henry V' 'Measure for Measure', and 'Much Ado About Nothing'.

The author has not achieved due success in translating the verse portion of the original. Often, therefore, he has rendered the original verse into prose. His language, although not altogether free from defects is sufficiently simple, lucid and regular.

Pandit Satya Narayan Kavi-ratna' has translated Bhavabhuti's 'Uttara-rāma-carita' and 'Mālati-Mādhava'. He has tried to retain the sense and beauty of the original as far as possible, and has translated the original verse in Braja Bhāsā in various metres. At certain places he has used very rare and colloquial words and made the language hard to understand

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All these translations have been published by Ram Narain Lal, Publisher, Allahabad.

of Sanskrit, Bengali and English were translated into Hindi by learned writers. In this rush of translations, which began in the nineteenth century and continued well into the current century, the attention of playwrights was so much diverted from original compositions and they were so much led away by the charm of classical, Western and Bengali plays that not a single original drama of note appeared in this period.

Babu Gopal Ram Gahmari has written a large number of interesting detective novels. In addition to these novels, he wrote a few dramas as well. In 1912 he wrote 'Banbīra Nāṭaka' on the basis of a Bengali drama. The theme of this play is the great sacrifice of that Rajput nurse Panna who saved the life of her baby-master Udaya Sinha from Banbir Sinha, and sacrificed her own beloved son in his stead. In the play the comic has been mingled with the pathetic, the heroic and the dreadful sentiments, and this play bears testimony to the skill of Gahmari as a translator.

Rai Bahadur L. Sita Ram started his literary career during the life-time of Bharatendu. He has not written any original drama, but has contributed much to this side of literature by translating a good number of plays from Sanskrit and English. His translations of different Sanskrit dramas have been referred to in Chapter VII. In addition to these, he translated eleven plays of Shakespeare into Hindi namely, 'As You Like It', 'Othello', 'Julius Caesar', 'Cymbeline', 'King Richard II', 'Tempest', 'King Lear', 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', 'Comedy of Errors' and 'Henry V' 'Measure for Measure', and 'Much Ado About Nothing'.

The author has not achieved due success in translating the verse portion of the original. Often, therefore, he has rendered the original verse into prose. His language, although not altogether free from defects is sufficiently simple, lucid and regular.

Pandit Satya Narayan Kavi-ratna' has translated Bhavabhuti's 'Uttara-Rama-carita' and 'Malati-Madhava'. He has tried to retain the sense and beauty of the original as far as possible, and has translated the original verse in Braja Bhasa in various metres. At certain places he has used very rare and colloquial words and made the language hard to understand.

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He died at the age of thirty-five and has, therefore, not contributed much to Hindi drama.

Rūpa Nārāyaṇa Pānde, the well-known editor of the 'Mādhurī' (Lucknow) has made a very great contribution to Hindi drama by translating a number of plays of Girish Ghosh, D.L. Roy, and Rabinder Nath Tagore. In addition to his 'Aśoka' which is an original play, he translated 'Kṛṣṇā Kumārī'[1] of Michel Madhusudana Datta, 'Āhuti Athavā Jayapāla'[2] of some anonymous Bengali playwright, 'Acalāyatana'[3] of Tagore, and 'Khān Jahān'[4], 'Usa Pāra'[5], 'Durgā Dāsa'[6], 'Tārā Bāī', 'Shāh Jahān' and 'Candra-Gupta' of Drijindra Lal Roy. His translations are extremely beautiful and he has infused so much force, flow and liveliness into his translations that they appear to be original compositions.

One of his earliest translations is 'Kṛṣṇā Kumārī', which relates the touching story of Kṛṣṇā, princess of Udai Pur, who sacrificed her life in order to save her motherland from the attacks of the Rajas of Jaipur and Marwar, both of whom had applied for her hand in marriage. On several occasions the playwright has used very poetical language:-

धन दास — (हंस कर) महाराज, इस फुलवारी के सभी फूलों का रस आप एक एक बार ले चुके हैं। नये फूलों में केवल धतूरा, मदार आदि के सुगंध-हीन फूल ही बाकी रह गये हैं। अब तो जयपुर भर में महाराज के सूंघने लायक एक भी खुशबूदार रंगीला फूल नहीं देख पड़ता। (Act I scene 1)

The clever attendant means to say that the sensual king of Jaipur has tasted all the beauties of Jaipur, and now there is no fresh beauty left that can be brought to him for enjoyment.

The translator has introduced several songs at very appropriate places. He has achieved great success in translating the terrible yet touching scene leading to the proposed murder of the princess. Her uncle experiences a sharp conflict of Duty and affection as he goes with his sword drawn, to murder the innocent princess at dead of night under orders from her father—

बलेन्द्र — . . . . (आंसू पोंछ कर) बेटी मैं निष्ठुर चांडाल हूं। मैं बिना अपराध के तेरे प्राण लेने आया हूँ। आहा बेटी बिल्कुल बेखटके निद्रा देवी की शान्ति-मय गोद में विश्राम कर रही है। मुख का भाव देखने से जान पड़ता है, यह बड़े सुख से मनोहर स्वप्न देख रही है। लेकिन वह नहीं जानती कि पास ही काल रूप धारण किये पापी चाचा प्राण लेने के लिये खड़ा है। (Act V scene 3)

The affectionate uncle fails to commit this terrible sin. Kṛṣṇā her-

1. कृष्णा- कुमारी. २. आहुति अथवा जयपाल. ३. अचलायतन. ४. खांजहां. ५. उसपार. ६. दुर्गादास.

-self in the end, offers to sacrifice her own life for her motherland. She is a true Rajput girl, who is not afraid of death at all—

कृष्णा — पिता जी! आप इस साधारण बात के लिए इतना शोक क्यों कर रहे हैं? सभी जीवों को एक दिन मरना है, फिर उसके लिये शोक क्या करना?..... कुल के मान की रक्षा के लिये प्राण देने से बढ़कर पुण्य-कार्य और क्या हो सकता है?......" (Act II scene 3)

Rāma Candra Varmā has also translated many plays from Bengali, which are as good as those of Rūpa Nārāyaṇa Pānde. He translated Girish Ghosh's 'Praphulla'[1], 'Vaidhavya Kathora Danda Hai Yā Śānti[2] etc.' D.L. Roy's 'Mevāṛa Patana'[3], 'Nur Jahān'[4], 'Mahārāṇa Pratāp' etc. From English he translated 'Step-husband' under the title 'Manganī Ke Miyān'[5] and Joan of Arc'. Most of these translations appeared late in the twentieth century, and not during the period in question.

Maithili Sarana Gupta, the great Hindi poet, translated 'Tilottamā'[6], a mythological play from Bengali. It has five acts, and all its characters are gods, goddesses or demons. The play is written strictly on classical lines: it has the Nāndī, the Prastāvanā, Viskambhaka (interlude) before the 2nd and the fifth acts, and the acts are not divided into scenes. The language abounds in Tatsama words, and even the Daityas speak Sanskrit-ridden Hindi. Verse is also very freely used in the play.

Gupta also translated Bhāsa's 'Svapnavāsavadattam', which is as good as his translation of Tilottamā.

In addition to these translations, Gupta wrote another original play 'Candra-hāsa' (1916). It is again based on a mythological theme and has five acts, with four scenes each. This play is also written on classical lines, although the verse is not so abundant. The language is quite simple, and maintains a regular flow throughout the play.

Another original drama of this period is 'Candrakalā-Bhānu Kumāra'[7] of Rai Devī Prasād Pūrna. The huge size of the play makes it totally unfit for the stage, and the author himself has admitted that he wrote this play for reading purposes and not for the stage. The playwright has not shown any skill in plot-construction and characterisation.

Revival of Hindi Drama.

Although the period between 1885 and 1912 was extremely disappoint-

1. प्रफुल्ल. 2. वैधव्य कठोर दण्ड है या शान्ति. 3. मेवाड़-पतन. 4. नूरजहां. 5. मंगनी के मियां
6. तिलोत्तमा. 7. चन्द्रकला-भानुकुमार.

-ing in original drama, yet it is to be noted with satisfaction and joy that it was succeeded by a very rich period. The period which succeeded the sterile period was more exuberant even than the period that preceded it. It seems as if this sterile period instigated the succeeding genius to take up the task of Hindi drama with greater enthusiasm and speed, so that once Hindi drama resumed its natural course, it continued its unchecked and ever-growing progress on all sides. The dramas of the new period were, on the whole, much superior to the plays that had occupied the ninteenth century. They were more artistic, and had greater coherence in plot-construction, superior skill of characterisation and dialogue. In this very period, Jaya Shankar Prasad made his august appearance and made highly valuable contribution to Hindi drama.

The year 1912 stands as an important land-mark in the history of Hindi drama. In this year Badrī Nāth Bhaṭṭa brought forth his 'Kuru-vana-dahana', which possessed the elements of new dramatic art. Bharatendu's genius nicely displayed the beauty of the plot in 'Nīladevī', of music in 'Bhārata-Jananī', of a profuse flow of sentiment in 'Śrī Candrāvalī', and of characterisation in his 'Satya-Hariś-candra'. His 'Andhera Nagarī' abounded in the humorous, and the same way his other plays did possess one merit or the other. But all these qualities were not to be found together in one single play. This ideal was attained by Badrī Nāth Bhaṭṭa in his 'Kuru-Vana-dahana', which is an adaptation of 'Veṇī-Saṁhāra'. Here the playwright has given us in one place the beauty of plot-construction and has displayed adequate power of characterisation, together with occasional touches of sprightly humour. In the foreword he writes—

" Instead, I resolved to try another course, which I hoped, would allow me more freedom to my pen, that is, of remodelling it. The present work is the result of that attempt. I have completed it in seven acts, instead of six, and have tried to make it suit the modern taste and conditions, as far as possible, by means of various additions, omissions and alterations in the speeches of the Dramatis Personae. I have even introduced some new characters together with humorous dialogues, whenever I thought it necessary. Infact, I have tried to make this work a type of the combination of English and Sanskrit dramaturgy"....etc.

Moreover, we witness a more balanced and artistic distribution and direction of the plot in the new era. Less important scenes have been disposed of in shorter spaces, while adequate length has been given to such scenes that enhance the dramatic effect. For instance, in 'Kuru-Vana-dahana Bhīṣma's death has been informed in a small scene in course of the dialogue of two ordinary characters, while one full act has been devoted to the murder of Jayadratha. In this way, the plays of this period display greater artistic restraint and dexterity of direction.

Another note worthy feature of these plays is their diction. The frequent use of verse which was an imitation of the Parsi theatre, has gradually diminished, and in later plays, especially those of Jaya Shankar Prasād, Bechana Sharmā Ugra and others it has been totally boycotted. On the other hand, a realistic touch has been brought in the speeches of characters. While the educated and cultured people use the literary form of 'Khari Boli', the labourers and the illiterate characters use their respective dialects. Most of the playwrights have conformed to this practice, while others have used one and the same language for all the characters. Jaya Shankar Prasād, in particular, has used the same poetical, ornate and advanced Khari Boli for all his characters, to whichever class they belong.

Dialogue became more relevant, simple and brief. Gradually the playwrights started devoting attention to the psycho-analysis of their leading characters, and in most cases, internal conflict of a very realistic nature is described in these plays.

The appropriate introduction of humorous scenes, of a cultured nature, has been another significant development in this period. For the first time we come across a beautiful admixture of the serious and the comic in 'Kuru-Vana-dahana'. Moreover, the play can be very successfully performed on the stage. The defects which usually make their appearance in Sanskrit drama owing to the predominance of sentiment and emotion, have been eliminated here. In short, with 'Kuru-vana-dahana' Hindi drama took a turn towards the artistic development, and since then, its progress has not slowed down to the present day.

HINDI DRAMA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (contd.)

ter XI.

The Second Phase (1912-1930).

Various Tendencies of the Period.

After stepping over the sterile period we now decend upon one of the most flourishing periods of Hindi Drama, i.e. from 1912 to 1930. This period is dominated by the colossal personality of Jaya Shankar Prasad,[1] who produced his first play namely 'Karuṇālaya'[2] in 1912, and wrote his last (with the exception of a short play, 'Dhruva-swāminī'[3] which appeared in 1934) play 'Candra-Gupta-Maurya'[4] in 1930. This exuberant period opens with Bhaṭṭa's 'Kuruvana-dahana', which had strong touches of the advanced dramatic art and closes with Prasād's 'Candra-Gupta', which is perhaps the most splendid work of the period. The literary drama made a wide progress in this period, and produced a number of plays which certainly deserve to be called the proud asset of Hindi Drama.

Before proceeding to deal with different plays of this period, it will be appropriate here to discuss themain tendencies of the audience during this period. There were people who took keen interest in the lives of their epic heroes and certain leading personalities of the Puranas. Others loved the historical personages of the days of Hindu ascendancy, and yet others rejoiced in the romantic stories of Arabian Nights and Persian literature. As the tastes of the audience varied, so also their choice of different types of stories. From the point of view of taste, the audience of this period can be divided into following categories.

The first group consisted of those people who lived in remote village and earned their livelihood by means of agriculture or labour in the villages

1. जय शंकर प्रसाद. 2. करुणालय. 3. ध्रुवस्वामिनी. 4. चन्द्र गुप्त मौर्य.

They were far removed from the crowded cities, the centres of modern education and culture. The education and knowledge of these simple-minded people was confined to the epics or the popular stories of the Puranas. Their taste was naturally religious and they used to revel in religious performances like Rama-lila, Rasa-lila, and the semi-religious performances of the stories of Puran Bhakta and Gopi Chand etc.

To the next category belong those people who, no doubt, lived in cities but were, at the same time, not very much advanced in modern civilization and culture. They consisted mostly of idle, stay-at-home people who never work with the spirit of the time. They were still labouring under the romantic influence of Muslim Durbars, and their taste was more medieval than modern. They were mad after the cheap entertainment of the Parsi theatres, and mostly liked the performances of the love-stories of Laila-Majnu and Shirin Farhad etc. They had no religious bent of mind and were fed up with mythological and religious themes. They revelled in the sensational scenes of love and enterprise, and loved to see cheap love, rough humour, frivolity and fragility on the stage.

This group was the largest in magnitude and consisted chiefly of shop-keepers, office-clerks, business-men and the labourer-class of the cities. Even those aristocratic people, who had liking more for cheap fun and amusement than serious plays, often attended these performances. This was the group that patronised the Parsi theatre for more than half a century.

There was yet another class of people who were fully educated and cultured, but whose tendency was, all the same, religious. They hated the sensational melodramas of the Parsi stage, and criticised them as degrading and demoralising. Epic heroes and Puranic personages were their ideal, and they highly appreciated the great superhuman deeds of their mythological ancestors. This group, which was equally large in magnitude, patronised the mythological drama.

The fourth group consisted of those highly educated and intelligent people who attached more importance to the glories of their past history than to religion and mythology. They were fired with the spirit of patriotism and cultural revival. They loved ancient Indian culture and

civilization, and wished to see the restoration of the lost glory of their country by means of recollecting some of the forgotten tales of India's greatness. This group was the smallest in number, but at the same time, it consisted of such people who were most intelligent and enlightened and who meant to do the real service to the mother-land and to the Hindu nation. They gave rise to historical drama, and Jaya Shankar Prasād was the champion of this school.

Yet another group consitituted of those people who were political, social, religious and literary reformers. We have noticed that, with the advancement of learning and the establishment of lithographic press, an awakening had swept the whole country in the latter half of the ninteenth century. The religious movement of the Arya Samaj, the political movement of the Indian National Congress and the intllectual and literary movement of Bharatendu and M.P. Dvivedī gave birth to a class of reformers who aimed at the reformation of contemporary religious, political social and literary evils by means of drama. For this purpose they adopted the instrument of satire, and in their satirical farces they lashed those evils which they wanted to banish from society and religion.

In addition to these farces and satires which were written on contemporary evils, a number of serious dramas were also written on these very topics. In these, though their number is not so large as that of satires, the playwrights have discussed the evils of the day in a serious, and even didactic manner. In the next phase of Hindi Drama, these plays, under the vital influence of the realistic tendency in Western literature, developed into problem plays. Of these problem plays, as we shall discuss later, Pt. Lakshmī Nārāyan Miśra and Seth Govind Dās proved to be chamions.

So far we were dealing with the types of plays which came into existence as a result of the different tendencies of the audience. For these there was a popular demand by a smaller or larger number of people. But there is one more type of drama which flourished in this period merely as a result of the playwright's fancy. Here we are referring to the allegorical drama which was attempted by one or two playwrights in this period. In Sanskrit, Prabodha Candrodaya' is a famous example of this type. In this period Prasad's 'Kāmanā' stands out as the most successful attempt at allegorical drama.

Having made a reference to the different categories of audience with diverse tendencies and tastes, we now proceed to discuss these types of dram one by one.

(1) Rasa-lilas and Rama-lilas.

The popular medieval types of performances like the Rasa-lila, Rama lila and 'Nautankis' etc., which held their sway in the ninteenth century, remained popular to some extent even in this period. However, their influence was sharp relaxing, and their audience was gradually turning to Parsi theatres. But the 'movies' dealt a mortal blow to these performances: touring talkies began to visit small towns, the centres of these medieval performances, and their popularity left no audience and admirers for these performances. By the end of the period in question these performances had lost all their popularity. Today, while Rama-lila has still survived in some form or the other in certain parts of the country, Rasa-lila is not known beyond the area of its origin. 'Nautankis' have died out altogether.

(2) Melodramas of the Parsi Theatre.

The Parsi Theatrical plays which originated in the ninteenth century and suddenly became popular, became even more popular and advanced in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Uptill the end of the last century only melodramas with romantic themes were staged at the Parsi theatres. Later, their playwrights diverted their attention to mythological themes too but these romantic plays still held the ground. The plot of these plays used to be drawn either from Persian love-stories or popular romantic tales. Occasionally, the playwright would himself fabricate a plot after their design and pattern. The central theme and chief events and atmosphere of all these plays were similar: their atmosphere was essentially sensational and melodramtic. Usually the lover and beloved would fall in love at first sight in some romantic surroundings, and then would follow a series of obstacles, of various kinds, in the way of their consummation of love and final marriage. The obstacles would mostly arise out of the mutual jealousies and hostilities of the two families (e.g. Romeo and Juliet, 'Laila-Majnu), or the two families being placed in opposite social, religious or financial camps. The lover and the beloved had to undergo a series of trials, tribulations and privation: they had even to fight against the

conspiracies of their opponents. The hero, in all these plays gives evidence of his gallantry and valour and succeeds in marrying the lady of his heart in the end. The love portrayed in these plays is not the bashful Indian maidenly love, but prompt, shameless and perhaps Muslim love. It often borders on vulgarity and obscenity. But not only that the audience did not resent such scenes and atmosphere, they were verily mad after them.

Another characteristic of these plays is their total disregard of probabilities and consistencies. Several events of these plays are improbable and unnatural. Often the hero would make so bold as to fall upon, single-handed, with sword in his hand on a crowd of enemies and would come out victorious, after sustaining little or no injuries. The plot of these plays, is thoroughly dominated by chance and coincidence. A long-lost child sometimes appears in the garb of the hero, and on others a healthy, hail and hearty man dies all of a sudden, simply because the playwrightx wants to make the situation sensational and surprising.

The playwrights were always after sentational and sentimental situations. They freely introduced violent action and exciting episodes, whether they looked consistent or otherwise. So far as the characterisation of these plays is concerned, their characters are all stock characters. They are types and never individuals. They are ideal lovers, ideal villains, ideal friends or ideal conspirators. They always belong to a particular category, and are not individual human beings with natural virtues or failings. These plays present a very narrow and restricted view-point about life. They never display the subtle and superior emotions of man, but always the gross and worldly emotions of love, enmity, anger, hatred etc. Their heroes and heroines are expert only in love-intrigues, and the atmosphere of these plays is entirely of love and romance.

But there is one more commendable feature of these romantic melodramas of the Parsi theatres. Although they abound in melodramatic element and their love is unbashful, unmaidently and even un-Indian, still they succeeded in maintaining a high ethical standard. In all these plays it is truth and virtue that triumphs over evil and mischief. Victory goes to true and sincere love in these plays, and all conspiracies are frustrated in the end. The villain meets the tragic end. Divine help descends for the

innocent and the noble, and Destiny favours them to their best advantage. Thus, although the atmosphere of these plays is not noble and dignified, their humour rough and vulgar, their situations melodramatic and even undramatic, yet they have preserved a lofty ethical standard.

Chapter XII. MYTHOLOGICAL DRAMA.

Broadly speaking, we come across three different kinds of mythological drama in this period. The Parsi stage was dominated by Romantic drama till the year 1912, when Narayan Prasad Betab wrote his 'Mahābhārata', and thus introduced mythological theme in Parsi theatre. He was soon followed by Radhe Shyam Kathavachak, Agha Hashra Kashmiri, Hari Krishna 'Jauhar', Tulsi Datt Shaida and others, and thus mythological themes became more popular than the romantic themes on the Parsi stage.

Another set of playwrights wrote literary dramas on mythological themes. Badri Nath Bhatta wrote 'Kuru-Vana-dahana' and 'Bena-Carita'[1], Makhan Lal Chaturvedi wrote his famours 'Kṛṣṇārjuna-Yudha'[2] Maithilī Śarana Gupta wrote 'Candra-hāsa' and 'Tilottamā', Vishwambhar Nath Sharma 'Kaushik' wrote 'Bhīṣma'[3] etc.

There is another brief set of plays, consisting of Sudarshan's 'Anjanā'[4], and Prasāda's 'Nāga Yajña'[5] etc. which are based on mythological themes, but whose atmosphere is not mythological. These plays are, rightly speaking, historical plays, because their authors have created a historical and a realistic atmosphere in them, and not the supernatural and super-human atmosphere as we find in other mythological plays in general.

In addition to these three categories, we find a few more plays which have a historical theme but a mythological atmosphere. For instance 'Tulsī Dāsa' of Badrī Nath Bhatta, 'Śankara-Digvijaya'[6] of Baldev Prasad Miśra, 'Mahātma Kabīra' of Hasrat are not mythological plays, as Tulsidas Śankarācārya and Kabīr are not mythological figures. But historical though these characters are, they have been treated in a mythological and superhuman manner; secondly, history does not give us exact account of their lives and achievements. Traditional stories, popular among the

1. बेन-चरित. 2. कृष्णार्जुन-युद्ध. 3. भीष्म. 4. अंजना. 5. नागयज्ञ. 6. शंकर दिग्विजय.

people and even in books depict them as semi-mythological persons, with super-human powers at their command. These historical personages have been raised to the heights of mythological heroes.

However different the plot-construction and characterisation of these categories may be, there are certain features which are common to all of them. Firstly, their plot is religious, culled from mythological sources; secondly, they introduce super-human and super-natural elements, and lastly they deal with an age when the conception of Dharma (Duty) Love and Morality— the very outlook on life — was entirely different from the present day.

A. Mythological Plays of the Parsi Theatres-

The foremost among the playwrights of this school are Radhe-Shyam Katha Vachak, Narayan Prasad Betab, Agha Hashra Kashmiri,, Hari Krishna 'Jauhar' and Tulsi Datt Shaida. Although their mythological plays have much in common with their romantic melodramas (discussed above), yet there is one marked distinction. These mythological plays have essentially a didactic note behind them. Just as in romantic plays, the playwrights always looked for sensational situations, similarly here they sought to sermonise to the audience on some religious or moral principle. In his introduction to 'Patnī-Pratāpa or Satī Anasūyā'[1], Betab tells us that the aim of his drama is to establish the greatness of faithful wife. Similarly, Baldev Prasad Khare, in his Prastāvanā to 'Rājā Śivi'[2] informs us that the aim of his work is toofold — (1) religious teaching, and (2) uplift of the country

Essentially didactic as all their plays are, they do not impart only one lesson in one play. The playwright may have multifarious messages for the audience in a single play. For instance, in 'Bhakta-Prahlād'[3] Kathāvāchak emphasizes devotion to God on one side, and at the same time indirectly preaches the Doctrines of Ahimsā and Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi. He also pleads for the education of women in the same play. 'Hasrat' preaches Hindu-Muslim unity in his 'Mahatma Kabīra'[4]. As a result of this greed to add a didactic note, these playwrights often introduce irrelevant and inconsistent scenes.

In order to make their didactic note more clear and deep, these

1. पत्नी-प्रताप अथवा सती अनसूया. 2. राजा शिवि 3. भक्त-प्रह्लाद. 4. महात्मा - कबीर.

playwrights resort to a strange course. Alongside of the main plot, they invent one or more imaginary plots in order to enhance and intensify the effect of their teachings. In almost every play there is one main plot which is mythological, and two subordinate plots — one for comparison and the other for contrast. In 'Satī-Anasūyā', for example, the main story is of Anasūyā; but there are two more subordinate plots — one for comparison, of Revā, who with the power of her wifely virtue stops the rising of the sun, and the second for contrast, of an immoral woman who suffers for her dirty deeds. In this way, by comparison and contrast, the playwright has tried to make Anasūyā's character look more charming and impressive, and to produce deeper effect on the mind of the audience than otherwise. Similarly in 'Rājā Dilīpa' of Gopal Damodar Tamskar, the main plot is of King Dilīpa and his wife Sudakṣiṇā and their devotion to Nandinī, Vaśiṣṭha's cow. In addition to this, for comparison with the main plot the story of Sutāśana and Rakṣā, who are very much worried for having no issue and go to sage Kuśiṣṭha for his advice and help, has been introduced. On the other hand the story of Hutāśana and Kudakṣā, who are fed up with the large number of children and find it difficult to bring them up properly, is invented for contrast.

The main plot being always mythological and well-known, these playwrights had not much scope for originality and invention in it. So they resorted to the scheme of secondary plots, in which their genius, whatever it was, could have a free hand. One can promptly ask as to why did not these playwrights dispense with the main mythological plot altogether, and developed only their secondary plots into a primary one. They could have given greater evidence of their genius and talents, had they concentrated all their skill on the fabricated plots. But we have to remember that the audience of this period was mad after mythological and epic names. People had not, as yet, developed a considerable taste or liking for plays with imaginary names and themes, howsoever artistic they may be. They were drawn by the mere names of mythological personages, and did not care so much about the details of the play. Supposing if 'Rājā Dilīpa' of Gopal Damodar Tamaskar was performed on the stage after substituting ordinary names for mythological names, very few people, if any, would have liked the play, although the events and the plot of the play would have been kept strictly the same.

1. राजा दिलीप.

playwrights resort to a curious course. Alongside of the main plot, they invent one or more imaginary plots in order to enhance and intensify the effect of their benedictions. In almost every play there is one main plot which is mythological, and two subordinate plots — one for comparison and the other for contrast. In 'Satī-Anasūyā', for example, the main story is of Anasūyā, but there are two more subordinate plots — one for comparison, of Devā, who with the power of her wifely virtue stops the rising of the sun, and the second for contrast, of an immoral woman who suffers for her dirty deeds. In this way, by comparison and contrast, the playwright has tried to make Anasūyā's character look more charming and impressive, and to produce deeper effect on the mind of the audience than otherwise. Similarly in 'Rājā Dilīpa' of Gopal Damodar Tamaskar, the main plot is of King Dilīpa and his wife Sudakṣiṇā and their devotion to Nandinī, Vasiṣṭha's cow. In addition to this, for comparison with the main plot the story of Sumedhas and Ratnā, who are very much worried for having no issue and go to sage Kaśyapa for his advice and help, has been introduced. On the other hand the story of Nutanna and Sudakṣā, who are fed up with the large number of children and find it difficult to bring them up properly, is invented for contrast.

The main plot being always mythological and well-known, these playwrights had not much scope for originality and invention in it. So they resorted to the scheme of secondary plots, in which their genius, whatever it was, could have a free hand. One can promptly ask as to why did not these playwrights dispense with the main mythological plot altogether, and developed only their secondary plots into a primary one. They could have given greater evidence of their creative art genius, had they concentrated all their skill on the imaginary plots. But we have to remember that the audience of this period was more given to mythological and auto themes. People had not, as yet, developed a considerable taste or liking for plays with imaginary names and themes, howsoever artistic they may be. They were drawn by the mere names of mythological personages, and did not care so much about the details of the plots. Supposing if 'Rājā Dilīpa' of Gopal Damodar Tamaskar was performed on the stage after substituting secondary names for mythological names, very few people, if any, would have graced the plays although the events and the plot of the play would have been kept entirely the same.

We can also ask as to why did not these playwrights devote all their attention and ability to the mythological plot, and dispense with the secondary plots altogether. Knowing as they did that the audience rejoiced immensely in mythological names and themes, they would have done better had they displayed all their skill in developing the mythological plot itself, and giving it a masterly touch and finish. We know Kalidasa's "Śakuntalā" is based on a mythological story, but still the poet, by means of his masterly genius and high dramatic skill, has made this play one of the best plays of the world. Well, here we have to keep one thing in view. While it is so easy to write a play on a mythological theme, it is, at the same time, so very difficult to infuse necessary life and force in it. Superb skill and masterly genius is essential for making a mythological play a really wonderful piece of art. These mythological playwrights lacked that genius, and hence they, instead of giving evidence of their talent in the main plot alone, resorted to the cheap tactics of introducing secondary plots.

Another outstanding feature of these plays is the abundance of supernatural element. These playwrights have deliberately introduced super-natural situations in their plays, simply because the audience believed in and very much liked, the supernatural feats of the mythological personages. The supernatural situations gave rise to surprising and sensational scenes which the audience was verily mad after. For instance, in 'Hasrat's Mahātmā Kabīra' when Kabir delivers a speech on Hindu-Muslim Unity, there suddenly appears a scene in which is shown Mahatma Gandhi shaking hands with Maulana Shaukat Ali. And immediately as Kabir claps his hands, Queen Victoria, Edward VII and George V make their apperance on the stage.

The playwrights of this class have tried to present us with a realistic picture of the mythological times. Just as while reading the historical plays of Jaya Shankar Prasad, one really feels transported to those very times and surroundings, similarly these playwrights have also tried to portray a true, faithful and appropriate picture of mythological times, so that we may clearly and closely witness the atmosphere and character of those times. But their so-called realism has succeeded in producing pictures of

vulgar love scenes, low standard of morality, and an atmosphere of sensuality, greed and malice. Perhaps in their opinion our great men of the past were no way better or higher than the most ordinary people of the ninteenth century. In 'Gaṅgāvataraṇa' of 'Hasrat' the conversation between Lakṣmī and Saraswatī descends to the shameless level of wanton girls. Lakshmī is reproaching Saraswatī in the following words —

हंस के दिल लेना तुम्हें आता नहीं
बोसा भी देना तुम्हें आता नहीं।

Again attend to the dialogue of Bhāgīratha and the princess in the same play —

राजकुमारी — आपका निवास-स्थान?
भगीरथ — पास में प्रेमी हो तो स्वर्ग-उद्यान, नहीं तो उजड़ा मैदान।
राजकुमारी — आपका नाम?
भगीरथ — प्रेम में बदनाम।
राजकुमारी — यदि प्रेम प्राप्त हो?
भागीरथ — तब तो अहो भाग्य!

This is the trend of talk of Bhāgīratha, that illustratious scion of Sagara, who brought the divine Gaṅga from heaven to the earth.

In short these playwrights have depicted their mythological heroes exactly on the lines of sensual, passionate, uncultured and ordinary men and woman of their own times. The type of audience which went to see these performances enjoyed this atmosphere more than the pure, sublime and celestial atmosphere which would have rightly delineated the mythological age. Moreover, for the right portraiture of these great men, a thorough study of the culture and civilization, social and religious conditions of those times was essential. Abd these playwrights had neither the will nor the ability to undertake such a study.

Nor have these playwrights displayed an adequate power of characterisation. It seems as if they do not realise the significance nor possess the skill of character-painting. For the most part they have delineated their characters on the basis of the Puranas. But wherever they have introduced any changes or innovations, they have deteriorated the character. Moreover their characterisation is inconsistent and irrelevant. If they depict a particular character very great and firm in one virtue, they bring him down to the most ordinary level in the other. For instance, to refer to Bhāgīrad again, so far as his story of bringing the Gaṅgā to the world is concerned the playwright has maintained the mythological standard of greatness;

but where the author has tried to invent the remaining account of his life, he has portrayed him as low as a common man of the world.

As a result of this kind of characorisation, the didactic note of these plays fails to find any effect on the audience. Although the playwrights, through their characters, seek to preach against some social or religious evils, their words do not impress upon the minds of the people, because they come from the mouth of such characters who are no way higher than their own selves in everyday life.

Equally hopeless are these plays from the point of view of diction The diction of 'Kathavacahak's plays is literary and graceful to some extent, but even his similes and metaphors too are as distasteful and dirty as of other playwrights. There is no touch of refined taste or literary finish in their language, as we find from the following verse from 'Patnī Pratāpa' यम - सच है:

लपक पड़ती है सब की राल बाहर की सफ़ाई पर,
बरक़ चिपकाये हैं चांदी के गोबर की मिठाई पर।
इधर काग़ज़ की इक रद्दी है मक्खन औ मलाई पर,
नज़र क्या जाये इस की खुशगिज़ाई पर, बड़ाई पर।

In a word we can say that from all viewpoints - plot construction, characterisation, atmosphere and diction - the mythological plays of this school have been of a very low standard. They have no artistic merit and dramatic worth, although, by providing the audience with cheap entertainment, they became very popular among the people.

2. Mythological Plays of Bhatta's School

The leading plays of this school are 'Kuru-vana-dahana'[1], 'Bena-Carita'[2] and 'Tulsīdāsa'[3] of Badri Nath Bhatta, 'Krsnārjuna-Yuddha'[4] of Makhan Lal Chaturvedi, 'Bhīsma'[5] of Vishvambhar Nath Sharma Kausika, 'Candra-hāsa'[6] and 'Tilottamā'[7] of Maithili Śarana Gupta, 'Vara-Mālā'[8] of G.B. Pant, 'Siddhārtha Kumāra'[9] of Candrarāja Bhandārī, and 'Śankara-Digvijaya'[10] of Baldeva Prasāda Miśra. These plays are much superior works of art to the mythological plays of 'Betab' school. Their aim is purely literary and not didactic. They were not written in order to preach a particular doctrine or viewpoint.

1. कुरुवन दहन. 2. बेन चरित. 3. तुलसीदास. 4. कृष्णार्जुन युद्ध. 5. भीष्म. 6. चन्द्रहास.
7. तिलोत्तमा. 8. वरमाला. 9. सिद्धार्थ कुमार. 10. शंकर दिग्विजय.

Although these playwrights have selected mythological plots, yet they have given abundant evidence of originality by inventing new characters, events and situations. They have introduced appropriate innovations which have enhanced the dramatic effect and not spoiled it like the playwrights of 'Betab' school. Unlike the playwrights of that school, these dramatists have not resorted to the cheap tactic of introducing secondary plots for instituting a comparison and a contrast. They have mostly stuck to one main plot and have concentrated all their skill on the same. In this way they have succeeded in producing better works of art as their attention was not diverted by subordinate plots; and consequently, in their plays, there is no unrestrained rush of actions, scenes and situations. Their plot is properly constructed and is simple and clear. Situations are relevant and helpful to the artistic effect of the plays.

The super-natural element in these plays is less abundant and more useful than in those of the former category. It is not for the purpose of producing sensational and surprising scenes that these supernatural situations have been introduced, but because they are essential for the development of the plot or for the proper characterisation of the leading dramatis personae. In 'Kṛṣṇārjuna-Yuddha' of Makhan Lal Caturvedi the scenes of Citraratha's flying in the sky in his aerial-car and the subsequent appearance of Brahmā in the battlefield are essential for the proper development of the play. Similarly in other plays the choice of the supernatural element is very careful and considerate. In most of these plays, Destiny plays a powerful role. In 'Candra-hāsa' of Maithilī Śarana Gupta' the conception of 'Niyati' (Destiny) is a beautiful invention of the poet. It is she who is responsible for all the deeds of the characters, but none of the characters can see her.

The atmosphere of these plays is more realistic and faithful than that of the plays of the previous class. Although it is not so powerful and exact as to make us feel transported to those very times and lands, yet it is not inconsistent and degrading also as we find in Betab's school. In 'Śankara-Digvijaya' the playwright has nicely described the religious chaos and confusion prevalent at the time of Śankarācārya, who defeated all the opposite schools of thought and preached his doctrine of 'Advaitavāda'.

In the same way in 'Kṛṣṇārjuna-Yudha' the playwright has tried to bring about that atmosphere, although the character of the two disciples of sage Gālawa is not much different from our typical students of today.

Although these playwrights have greatly succeeded in bringing about an atmosphere of reality and of the spirit of those times, yet they have committed some blunders of anachronism. In 'Tulsīdāsa' (Act 1, scene 7) the queen arrests the Major and the Captain with the help of a pistol. Now 'Major' and 'Captain' are modern titles, and 'pistol' is a modern fire-arm. A careful playwright would never have allowed such oversights. In the same way in 'Bena Caritra' so many conspiracies, all of such a sort, have been designed that they do not look appropriate for the Sat Yuga. Such cases of oversight can be easily detected in all the plays of this class.

The playwrights of this school have displayed appreciable skill in characterisation. They have understood the real signficance of characterisat-ion, and have been alive to the need of proper characterisation in a play. If they have not succeeded in making their mythological characters so sublime and ideal, they have also not pulled them down to the level of ordinary men of the world. They have also escaped the great flaw of inconsistency caused by portraying one side of a particular character very high and idealistic and the other very common-place and ordinary.

In spite of this we have to admit that these playwrights have not devoted so much time and attention to characterisation as also to the beauty of the plot and its gradual development. Firstly, in none of these plays has the author described the internal struggle of the mind of the characters. Psycho-analytical study of important characters which we find for the first time in Prasād and which gets more frequent and wide in later drama, is altogether lacking in these plays. Not only that. In plays like 'Tulsidasa' and 'Siddhārtha-Kumāra' which are essentially character-plays, no reference has been made to the greatness of the character of the heroes. In the same way in 'Śankara-digvijaya' the hero defeats all the scholars of hostile camp achieves great honour and fame, but nowhere has the playwright given us an inkling into the real cause of his greatness or as to how he conceived his doctrine of Advaita.

Still, in spite of all their defects and drawbacks, we have to conced

that these plays, although they could not reach the dramatic height and artistic finish of Prasād's plays, are decidedly superior to the plays of 'Betab' school in every respect.

3. Prasāda's School of Mythological Plays.

In addition to his historical plays for which he is most celebrated, Jaya Śankara Prasāda[1] has written one or two mythological plays too (viz. 'Janmejaya Kā Nāgayajña'[2]). Sudarśana's[3] 'Añjanā'[4] also belongs to this category. But although their themes have been drawn from mythology, these plays are entirely lacking in the essential characteristics of mythological plays. Neither is their atmosphere religious nor do they introduce supernatural element. In every way, except their plot, they are like the historical plays of Prasād's school. So it is proper to discuss these plays under that title in the next chapter.

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1. जयशंकर प्रसाद. 2. जनमेजय का नागयज्ञ. 3. सुदर्शन. 4. अञ्जना.

Chapter XIII.

HISTORICAL DRAMA.

Although historical drama was not very popular among the people, who revelled most in mythological drama and the melodrama, still this is the most artistic and literary type in the period in question. At the bottom of these historical plays, which are mostly first-rate productions, works a strong feeling of cultural revival and reformation. Jaya Sankara Prasada is decidedly the best playwright of this class. His 'Rājya-Śrī'[1] 'Viśākha'[2], 'Candra Gupta'[3], 'Skanda-Gupta'[4], 'Ajāta Śatru'[5] and 'Dhruva-Swāminī'[6] are some of the leading historical plays. Becana Śarmā Ugra's[7] 'Mahātmā Īsā'[8], Sudarśana's 'Añjanā'[9], Prasada's mythological plays and Jagana Natha Prasāda Milinda's 'Pratāpa Pratijñā'[10] also belong to this category.

Besides these, there are a few more plays which though historical are yet not so very advanced and finished. They still betray some of the tendencies and traits of the Parsi theatre. Badri Nath Bhatta's 'Durgāvatī'[11] (1925) and 'Candra Gupta'[3] Candra-rāja Bhandārī's 'Samrat Aśoka'[12], Prem Chand's 'Karbalā'[13] and a few more plays belong to this class.

In 'Durgāvatī' the character of the brave Rajput queen of Gadha-mandala has been portrayed to describe her administrative capacity, her courage of heart and her enviable skill in the use of arms and strategies of war. In spite of her defeat and the death of his foremost fighters and brave beloved son 'Vira-nārāyaṇa' she does not lose courage, but fights on till she is killed by her own man who has turned a traitor. The closing scene of the play is a marvellous invention of the playwright in which the queen, after her death, ascends to heaven and is there introduced to the heroic and self-sacrificing personages of the past like Vikramāditya, Candra Gupta Maurya, Dāhara, Prithvīrāja and others.

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१. राज्य-श्री. २. विशाख. ३. चन्द्रगुप्त. ४. स्कन्द-गुप्त. ५. अजातशत्रु. ६. ध्रुव-स्वामिनी. ७. बेचन शर्मा 'उग्र'. ८. महात्मा ईसा. ९. अञ्जना. १०. प्रताप-प्रतिज्ञा. ११. दुर्गावती. १२. सम्राट अशोक. १३. कर्बला

Although the theme has been selected from medieval history, yet the play is lacking in adequate historical setting and background. The characters of the queen, her brave son, her minister and the commander-in-chief as also of traitor Badana Sinha and his ideal wife Sumati have been well portrayed. While Durgāvatī stands as an ideal of nobility and patriotism, Badana Sinha, the traitor proves quite contrary to those ideals. His character is most despicable and contemptible, so much so that his own life (Sumati) who ranks next only to the queen in her sacrifice and bravery, chooses to kill him with her own hands. With this otherwise unpardonable offence, Sumati rises in the estimation and admiration of all. She stands as an ideal Hindu woman who, truly patriotic as she is, does not hesitate in slaying her own husband, and then, like a most faithful and loving wife she immolates herself with the dead body of her lord.

The play betrays no impression of classical drama, while it has been deeply influenced by the theatrical drama. Verses, mostly of the theatrical type, have been frequently used and have been put even into the mouth of the queen: e.g.

रानी —...... आ चली आंधी इधर, यह चील मंडराने लगी,
बादलों की सी गरज कुछ कान में आने लगी। (Act I scene 3)

The dialogue is lively and conducted in a simple language of everyday use. But the soliloquies' and the 'asides' are very frequent, and on certain occasions the characters, even in 'aside', give vent to their emotion in poetry: e.g.

पृथ्वी राज — (तलवार पटक कर आप ही आप)
राजपूत की जाति पर पड़ी आज है गाज,
हाय गई वह वीरता। हाय गई वह लाज।
जिसका हमको गर्व था, पड़ी उसी पर धूल,
इससे तो अच्छा यही, हो क्षत्रिय निर्मूल। (Act I scene 1)

The comic has been introduced on very few occasions, and that also amidst very serious situations. For example, when the queen is very serious and even annoyed, Giradhārī Lala makes the following reply —

गिरधारी लाल — (तलवार को म्यान में रखता हुआ) आप विश्वास कीजिये, मैं चाहूं तो अभी अपनी गरदन काट लूं। हां, केवल यही सोच कर रह जाता हूं कि तलवार भी ब्रह्म है और गरदन भी ब्रह्म है। एक ब्रह्म को दूसरे ब्रह्म से क्यों लड़ाऊं? आपस की फूट अच्छी नहीं होती।.... (Act 1 scene 7)

The play has only three acts, and although characterisation is

quite powerful and adequate, the plot has been loosely constructed, and the action is unnecessarily swift or slow at various places.

Bhatta's 'Candra-gupta' which has five acts, betrayes greater influence or imitation of theatrical drama. Even the 'scenes' have not been written as 'Driśya' but 'scene' after the practice of theatrical dramas. The plot of this play begins where that of 'Mudrā-rākṣasa' ends. But this play is much inferior to that well known drama of political intrigues. Nor has the playwright undertaken a careful research of ancient history. The author seems to preach Hindu-Muslim unity in this play, which shows the effect of contemporary life on the playwright's mind. 'Candra-gupta' is even inferior to 'Durgāvatī' from the point of view of plot-construction and characterisation. There is plenty of humour, which sometimes does not fit in with the tune of the situation.

Prem Chand's 'Karbalā' (1924), which is his maiden attempt in the realm of drama, deals with the struggle of Hussain and his ultimate death at the hands of his Muslim foes. The significance of the play is twofold, it represents the spirit of the age and also shows the perpetual struggle between the life of spirit and that of flesh. Hussain stands for the higher ideal of truth and sacrifice; Yazid symbolises the baser life of lust for power and wealth. Although the playwright seems to have been inspired by Shakespearean tragedy, yet his tragic characters do not fall owing to a flaw in their character. Consequently Hussain, in spite of exciting a feeling of admiration by his heroic struggle, fails to excite a feeling of pity for want of a human weakness in his character. His character lacks the grace of a Hamlet or a Macbeth. Unlike the tragedies of Shakespeare, 'Karbalā' is a tragedy of idealism rather than a tragedy of character.

The play is totally unfit for the stage, although it is interesting for study. It would take about six hours to perform it on the stage; and in addition to its inordinate length, the battle-scenes consisting of huge armies, camels and tents make it impossible for stage action. The plot would have been more amusing and impressive, had the genius of Prem Chand given it the shape of a novel.

The characters being mostly Mohammadans, the language of their dialogue is full of Perso-Arabic words. But the playwright has written even

the stage direction in Urdu: e.g.(मुस्लिम से बग़लगीर होकर)etc. The characters of Bhagavraid and the Yogī, the only two Hindu characters in the play, are the invention of the author's genius. We hear Hindī only from these two characters in this play. Besides the heroic and the pathetic which are predominant, the amorous also steps in with the characters of Nasimā and Wahib.

The foremost feature of these historical plays is that their plot is very complex and complicated. Action has been piled upon action, and there is a rush of events and situations as in a novel. While in the novel the author has the liberty of adding a few pages more in order to make the complications clear, the playwright has no such option left for him. Consequently, the knitting of the plot sometimes gives an impression of looseness and incoherence.

These historical plays of Bhaṭṭa-school have much in common with the mythological plays of that school. The super-natural element though not very frequent, is yet not totally wanting in these plays and it enhances the dramatic beauty of the works. As in mythological plays, so aslo here two main defects are noticeable. Firstly the inner struggle of human mind has not been adequately brought out in these plays. Secondly, these plays are lacking in those high moments and serious occasions in which the leading characters of a drama give vent to their innermost feelings. The plays of Jaya Śankara Prasad are very rich in these high moments, and the psycho-analytical portraiture of characters is very lively and natural in them. As a result of the want of these two elements, characterisation of these plays has not been so powerful and perfect.

Prasada's School of Historical Drama.

Before dealing with Prasada's plays we take up Ugra's 'Mahatma Isa' (1922) and Sudarsana's Añjanā(1923). Añjanā is an excellent mythological play written on modern lines. The heroine, Añjanā represents the ideal of chastity, service and sacrifice. Her husband has gone to war for a period of twelve years. In the meantime he pays a flying visit to his wife and stays with her for a few days without the knowledge of other members of the family. This complicates the situation and her chastity is challenged by the elderly ladies of the family. Ultimately she is exiled, undergoes a

series of sufferings in banishment and in the end succeeds in restoring her prestige and honour.

Another minor theme dealing with the story of a revengeful woman, who, in spite of her mother's resistence wants to marry a youth of her own choice has been introduced to complicate the course of events. Pavana, the hero, is torn between two loyalties — to marry this passionate woman who loves him, or to marry the girl of his parents' choice. His marriage to the latter provokes the vengeance of the former woman.

'Añjanā' is a definite advance over previous mythological and historical dramas. In the first place the playwright has carefully dispensed with the convention of introducing frequent couplets in the course of dialogues. He has also laid a deep stress on the human motivation of characters and incidents in this tale of mythology. Although the playwright deplores the tendency of writing the dialogue in couplets and of introducing songs at inopportune places, yet at a few places, he has himself employed the rhyming and alliterative dialogue to create a rhetorical effect in the play. With slight abridgements, the play can be successfully performed on the stage.

'Mahātmā Īsā' is another beautiful play in which a foreign theme has been infused with Indian ideals and atmosphere. The playwright believes that Christ came to India in his young days, studies Hindu scriptures and imbibed Hindu ideals of service and sacrifice, and preached the same in his own mother-land. The character of Īsā (Christ) has been depicted in no different colours than those of a Hindu saint. He has much in common with the serenity and self-less aims of Mahatma Buddha or Mahatma Gandhi. The play can be successfully performed on the stage.

Ugra's characterisation is very natural and the characters of Īsā, Śāntī, Yohan, Herod and a few others have been nicely portrayed. The scene of Christ's crucifixion is most touching, but the sagacious playwright has not ended the play with that scene. He adds a few more scenes which describe the wonderful effects of Christ's sacrifice and the ultimate death of Herod, the villain. Supernatural element has been used on a few occasions to produce best dramatic effects. Even after crucifixion, Christ's ghost haunts the evil-doers, as in the following —

शावेल — (भयभीत) अरे! यह — ईसा? हां वही तो! वही है! यह यहां कैसे आया? समाधि से बाहर कैसे आया? प्रेत — प्रेत! वह — वह — उसके हाथों में — क्रूस की कीलों के छिद्र अभी तक बने हुए हैं! अभी उसमें का रक्त भी नहीं सूखा! ओह! कैसी तीव्र — अग्निमयी दृष्टि है! (आंखें मूंद लेता है) (Act III Scene 12)

Beautiful songs have been interspersed throughout the play, which add to its charm. The dialogue is very lively and forceful and the soliloquies are quite frequent. Throughout, the language of the play is pure Hindi and even non-Indian characters speak pure Hindi; for instance,

शावेल — सम्राट को इस आन्दोलन को शीघ्र रोक देना चाहिए — नहीं तो फिर कुछ भी करते धरते न बनेगा। गुप्त चरों से पता चलता है कि ईसी और ईसाइयों के भाषणों का जनता के ऊपर विचित्र प्रभाव पड़ता है। (Act III Scene I)

Although the pathetic is predominant towards the end, the comic has also been occasionally introduced, especially in the beginning in the conversation of disciples of Vivekācārya. At several places, 'Īsū' is made to praise India and Indian ideals in devotional terms; e.g.

ईसा — आर्य, आप धन्य हैं और धन्य है आपकी सभ्यता। इतनी उदारता, इतनी सहृदयता।
नागरिक — तो चलिए।
ईसा — (अनसुनी करके) क्या पृथ्वी के अन्य किसी भाग में ऐसे मनुष्य मिल सकते हैं? कदापि नहीं। यहां का एक-एक प्राणी देवता है — हरेक स्थान स्वर्ग! (Act I Scene I)

The next successful historical play is 'Pratāpa-Pratijñā' (1928) of Jagana Nātha Prasāda Milinda. It begins with the initiation of Pratapa as the ruler of Mewar and ends with his death. The Rajput princes who are a house divided against itself, fall on easy pray to the shrewd policy of Akbar. Pratapa, who has been entrusted with the honour of his mother-land symbolises the spirit of patriotism and chivalry. The crown to him is a symbol of duty, a bed of thorns. In a combat with his mighty foe, he loses everything till he is reduced to dire poverty. But true hero that he is, he is ready to break but not to bend, and thus sacrifices everything for his ideal.

The character of Akbar has been painted in varied colours. While on one hand he tries to bring the two races together, at the same time, like an expert diplomat he knows that battles are not always won by bravery alone. He must divide and rule. The characters of 'Śakta-Sinha' and Amara Sinha have also been well portrayed. The theme has been selected with the purpose of arousing the national consciousness of the people of the modern age. The soliloquies which have been written at a high poetical pitch, possess the potentialities of emotional stresses and strains, of intellectual elevation

and aesthetic appeal. The language is rich in metaphors and similes. The whole piece lends itself to a successful representation on the stage.

The theme of 'Utsarga' (1929) has been drawn from the historical researches of Colonel Todd. It relates the sacrifice of a brave Rajput Princess who penetrated the enemy camp in the guise of a song-stress. Her sacrifice consists in her voluntary death which is caused by her ascending the funeral pyre after she has been defeated. The proverbial heroism of the Rajput community is the chief motive in the selection of this theme.

Prasada's plays.

Coming to the plays of Jaya Sankara Prasada we find that they are the best historical plays of the period. In them the Hindi dramatic art reached its highest water-mark. The conflict or the inner strife which is an essential feature of a successful play is present in all the plays of Prasada. In them this conflict is very clear and the playwright makes a reference to it in the very beginning. For example, the struggle that goes on between Āryas and Nāgas, which forms the theme of 'Naga Yajna', has been hinted in the very opening scene:

सरमा — बहन मनसा, मैं तो आज तुम्हारी बात सुनकर चकित हो गई।
मनसा — क्यों? क्या तुमने यही समझ रखा था कि नाग जाति सदैव से इसी गिरी अवस्था में है? क्या इस विश्व के रंगमंच पर नागों ने कोई स्पृहणीय अभिनय नहीं किया? क्या उनका अतीत भी उनके वर्त्तमान की भांति अंधकार पूर्ण था!

This single speech is sufficient to point towards that conflict which is the keynote of this play. Similarly in 'Dhruva Swamini', the opening speech of Dhruva swamini makes a reference to the conflict between humility and haughtiness, which has been described in detail in the play itself —

ध्रुवस्वामिनी — (सामने पर्वत की ओर देखकर) सीधा तना हुआ, अपने प्रभुत्व की साकार कठोरता, अभ्रभेदी उन्मुक्त शिखर। और इन क्षुद्र कोमल निरीह लताओं और पौधों को इसके चरणों में लोटना ही चाहिए न!

In the same way in 'Ajatasatru' the contending qualities of the characters of Ajatasatru, Chalana, Vasavi and Padmavati, which are responsible for the development of the play have been hinted at in the very opening scene.

उत्सर्ग

Having cast a hint at the conflict in the opening scene, the plot of the play develops in such a manner that this conflict goes on deepening and widening, and different dramatic events and situations arise from the action and reaction of this conflict. In a similar way, in Sudarśana's Añjanā and Ugra's 'Mahātmā Īsā' a strong conflict works at the bottom of the play, which assumes a beautiful shape merely out of the actions and reactions of the struggle. In this clear and clever manipulation of conflict and the steady skilful development of the plot, the plays of Prasada are much superior to those of other dramatists, especially of the Bhatta school which were mostly lacking in these qualities.

Another outstanding feature of these plays is their plot, which is highly complex and complicated. In them, two or three sub-plots run alongside the main plot, and gradually they get so much confused and complicated that their dissolution becomes very difficult. The conflict, which is the very essence of these plays does not move across a single simple line, but takes a meandering course and passes through various curves. In Rājya-śrī, the main story is of Rājyaśrī, but the account of Suramā and Śāntī-bhikṣu also develops alongside of it, and both the plots get inter-linked at a later stage. The plot of 'Candra Gupta' is most complex, and one sometimes feels, lost in the rush of events and characters. In 'Nāga-Yajña' the sub plots of Dāminī and Uttaṅka, Saramā and Māṇavaka complicate the main plot. In the same way in 'Ajāta-śatru' several plots develop side by side. On one side in Magadha Ajātaśatru forces his father to vacate the throne for him and the king, having acted accordingly, retires to the forest with his wife Vāsavī. On the other side a conspiracy is going on between the queens of Udayana at Avanti. Māgandhī cleverly instigates Udayana against Padmāvatī, and herself disappears after setting fire to her own palace. Thirdly, prince Viśuddhaka revolts against his father Prasenajita, is exiled by the latter, and he returns to Kāshī in the guise of a robber (Śailendra), again to kindle the fire of revolt in Kāshī. Besides, there are still other sub-plots which very much confuse the main plot. One story moves forward, gets entangled with a second story, and thee gives rise to many more stories. One charecter transforms into another character, and one situation complicates the other. In this way, the development of the plot of all these plays is essentially romantic, and a very extraordinary skill and genius is required for the

successful handling of such plots. Prasada, who was possessed of this extraordinary calibre, has succeeded in this hard job, and nowhere does his plot show any signs of looseness and incoherence, nor has ~~been~~ any useless scenes, situations and characters been introduced.

Not only that their plot is romantic, the characterisation of these plays is also of an idealistic nature. Prasada, as also other play-wrights of his school, have not delineated their leading characters as ordinary men and women of the world, possessed of common emotions of human life. Their characters, e.g. Rājya Śrī, Bimbasāra, Manimālā, Viśākha, Mahātmā Īsā, Śānti, Añjanā and Pavana, are symbolic of extraordinary and rare, if not super-human emotions. They are far above the human level of feelings and interests. While in realistic characterisation, the playwright picks up ordinary human characters, possessed of normal human virtues and failings, in these idealistic characters the persons are possessed of superhuman and extraordinary virtues, tastes and emotions. The playwright casts a hint at the extraordinary nature of his character in the beginning, and then by means of diverse events and situations, emphasizes that nature of his character.

For instance, in 'Rājya Śrī' we find the queen very different from ordinary queens. She is very philosophical and thoughtful. Just mark a few of her utterances -

राज्य श्री — सुखी मनुष्य! तुम मरने से इतना डरते हो! ~~मम~~ हृदयों से पूछो — वे मृत्यु की कितनी सुखद कल्पना करते हैं। — (Act II Scene 7)

राज्य श्री — अस्त होते हुए अभिमानी भास्कर से पूछो — वह समुद्र में गिरने को कितनी उत्सुक है! पतंग — सदृश निराश हृदय से पूछो कि जल जाने में वह अपना सौभाग्य समझता है या नहीं (Act II Scene 7)

राज्य श्री — मैं दुःखी हूं, दस्यु! तुम धन चाहते हो, पर ~~जीवन? ओह~~ वह मेरे पास नहीं! इस विस्तीर्ण विश्व में सुख मेरे लिये नहीं; पर जीवन? आह! जितनी सांसें चलती हैं, वे तो चल कर ही रुकेंगी। तुम मनुष्य होकर हिंस्र पशुओं को क्यों लज्जित कर रहे हो! इस श्मशान को कुरेद कर जली हुई हड्डियों के अतिरिक्त मिलेगा क्या? (Act III Scene 2)

Such examples can be easily multiplied from the plays of Jaya Sankara Prasada.

Moreover, leading characters of these plays are mostly sentimental, poetic and philosophical. They work under emotions of idealism, are ready to go to the extreme in anger, mercy and forgiveness. In 'Añjanā' we find that Pavana's mother imposed false scandal on ~~her~~ Añjanā and turned her out of her

home. The poor girl passed her days in distress in a jungle, but even then, when her friend Vasantamālā suggests to take her to her husband, busy in fighting, Añjanā firmly refuses with the remark —

"वे इस समय युद्ध-भूमि में यशः प्राप्ति का काम कर रहे हैं, देश की सेवा कर रहे हैं, संसार में अपने देश का सर ऊंचा कर रहे हैं, मैं जाकर उनके हृदय को दूसरी ओर कर दूंगी तो सारा काम चौपट हो जायेगा, उनके अद्वितीय बल में न्यूनता आ जायेगी, ~~अपना~~ पराक्रम थोड़ा हो जायेगा। मैं यह पाप-कर्म नहीं कर सकती — अपने सुख पर देश और जीत के यश को निछावर नहीं कर सकती।

Highly laudable is this spirit of sacrifice of Añjanā for the good of her country and nation. In the same way in 'Nāga Yajña', Āstīka, whose father Jaratkāru was killed at the hands of Janamejaya, tries to bring about a reconciliation between the Āryas and Nāgas, and does not wreak any vengeance on Janamejaya for his offence. Saramā retaliates her own insult as also that of her son at hands of the Āryas by making a request for the marriage of Manimālā, the Nāga princess with Janamejaya — in order to bring about a compromise between the long-contending nations.

The following speech of Rājyaśrī also deserves attention on account of its ideal humanitarianism —

राज्यश्री — भाई हर्ष, यह रत्न जड़ित मुकुट तुम्हें भगवान ने इस लिये नहीं दिया कि लाखों सिरों को तुम पैरों से ठुकराओ। मेरी शान्ति ढूंढ कर तुमने उसे इतनी बड़ी नर-हत्या में पाया! हर्ष! विचार करो, तुमने मेरे सदृश कितनी स्त्रियों को दुखिया बनाया! तुम्हें क्या हो गया था?

(Act III scene 5)

Again mark the philosophical bent of mind of a king —

बिम्बसार — यदि मैं सम्राट न होकर किसी विनम्र लता के कोमल किशलयों के झुरमुट में एक अधखिला फूल होता और संसार की दृष्टि मुझ पर न पड़ती — पवन की किसी लहर को सुरभित करके धीरे से उस पाले में चू पड़ता — तो इतना भीषण चीत्कार इस विश्व में न मचता।

Besides these idealistic and philosophical characters, some other characters suffer from the fits of sudden change of mind. Evil suddenly turns into virtue at the behest of some great man, or under the influence of some particular event. In 'Nāga Yajña', Asva-Sena, who was at the point of forcibly violating the modesty of Damini, is rebuked by his sister Manimala so that he at once gives up that ignoble idea, assumes heroism and marches to the battle-field. In Rājyaśrī, the robber Vikataghosa puts

Rājyaśrī to great torment, but she readily forgives him. Deeply effected by her forgiveness, Vikaṭaghoṣa abandons his criminal life and becomes a Bhikṣu. In Ajātaśatru, queen Māgandhī is first converted into Śyāmā, a prostitute, and later, at the advice of Buddha this very harlot at once changes to Āmrapālī and resorts to the path of service and sacrifice. From realistic point of view, this sudden changes in the minds of a character may appear unnatural and inconsistent, but in romantic drama changes of this kind are quite appropriate and they add a strange beauty to the characters.

Psycho-analysis of the characters, which has become a regular feature in the Problem Plays of today (e.g. Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Miśra, Seth Gobind Das etc.), and is also tried even in other types of modern drama, is not very abundant in the romantic plays of Prasada. The internal struggle in the mind of a character can be best portrayed in Realistic drama. But still, in certain cases Prasada also had tried to delineate the struggle that goes on in the minds of his characters. For instance, in 'Dhruva-swāminī', the queen who had decided to commit suicide as Rāmagupta had resolved to surrender her to the Śaka King, suddenly feels a change in her mind after embracing Candragupta, and decides to live on. In the following soliloquy we find a free flow of the feelings of her mind —

ध्रुवस्वामिनी — कितना अनुभूति-पूर्ण था वह एक क्षण का आलिंगन! कितने सन्तोष से भरा था! नियति ने अज्ञात भाव से मानो लू से तपी हुई वसुधा को क्षितिज के निर्जन से सायं-कालीन शीतल आकाश से मिला दिया हो ..... तो भी मरूंगी नहीं। ..... कुमार! तुमने वही किया जिसे मैं ~~बचाती~~ बचाती रही। तुम्हारे उपकार और स्नेह की वर्षा से मैं भीगी जा रही हूँ। ओह, (हृदय पर उंगली रखकर) इस वक्षस्थल में दो हृदय हैं क्या? जब अन्तरंग 'हाँ' करना चाहता है तब ऊपरी मन 'ना' क्यों कहला देता है? (Act I page 32)

In addition to charcterisation, the diction of these plays has also its own beauty. The characters of the dramas of Bharatendu school appear to have no speech of their own: it is the playwright who actually seems speaking behind them. The dramas of Bhatta school, though not wanting in this respect, certainly lack epic-grandeur, delicate emotions, and high poeticism. But the dialogue of the historical plays of Prasad school is very natural, full of profuse poetic flow and delicate emotions. On several occasions the prose of Prasada's plays reaches poetical pitch e.g. in the 4th act of Candra-gupta even the austere Cāṇakya lays out his heart and discloses his tender-most feelings, when he says —

चाणक्य — "धड़कते हुए रमणी — वक्ष पर हाथ रख कर, उस कम्पन में स्वर मिला कर कामदेव गाता है। और राजकुमारी! वही काम-संगीत की तान सौन्दर्य की लहर बनकर युवतियों के मुख में लज्जा और स्वास्थ्य की लाली चढ़ाया करती है।"

Or again

चाणक्य — अकस्मात जीवन-कानन में, एक राका रजनी की छाया में छिप कर मधुर वसन्त घुस आता है। शरीर की सब क्यारियां हरी-भरी हो जाती हैं। सौन्दर्य का कोकिल 'कौन'? कहकर सब को रोकने-टोकने लगता है, पुकारने लगता है। राजकुमारी! फिर उसी में प्रेम का मुकुल लग जाता है, आंसू भरी स्मृतियां मकरन्द सी उसमें छिपी रहती हैं।"

Not only Prasada's plays abound in poetical speeches and high moments, the dramas of other historical playwrights of this period are equally rich in them. For instance, the emotional speech of Śāntī (who sincerely loves Īsā) at the touching scene of Īsā's crucifixion is possessed of great poetic colour —

शान्ति — ठहरो! अत्याचार के बादलो! सूर्यास्त से पहले कमलों को अपने मित्र की पवित्र मूर्ति आंखभर देख लेने दो, नहीं तो उनके दुःखी हृदय से प्रचण्ड वायु की तरह शोकोच्छ्वास निकलेगा और तुम्हारा सर्वनाश हो जायेगा। ठहरो! क्रूरता की अग्नि-शिखाओ! किसी गरीब का सर्वस्व भस्म करने से पहले उसे अपनी आंख भर निरीक्षण कर लेने दो, नहीं तो उसकी आंखों से वह जल प्रपात प्रकट होगा जिससे तुम्हारा अस्तित्व तक लुप्त हो जायेगा। (Act III Scene 8)

In addition to the use of poetical prose and the introduction of high moments in their dramas, these historical playwrights have inserted sweet songs, dripping with emotion at appropriate places. Although any character of these plays may resort to music on a suitable occasion, yet some characters are extraordinary fond of singing. Māgandhī of 'Ajātaśatru', Śāntī of 'Mahātmā Īsā' and Suramā of 'Rājyaśrī' are given to frequent fits of singing. Their songs are very emotional as well as significant, e.g. the song of Suramā in IInd Act, 6th scene of 'Rājyaśrī' —

संभाले कोई कैसे प्यार
मचल-मचल उठता है चंचल
भरलाता है आंखों में जल
विह्वल कर, चलता है अधर
लिये व्यथा का भार
संभाले कोई कैसे प्यार।

Moreover, all these playwrights have made use of one single language throughout their plays for all their characters. They have not used any dialects or any Urdu- Persian words, but have adhered to one language, i.e. high Hindi full of strong Tatsama words. They have carefully banished all Urdu words from their plays. In the plays of Prasada, the langu-

age sometimes gets so tough with Sanskrit words that it is very difficult to understand it easily on the stage. Even while reading in private, one has to read such passages twice in order to make out their exact sense.

Adding a little more criticism on Prasada's play, we can say that their basis is essentially cultural. Prasada was in fact enamoured of the glittering glory of the ancient Indian culture. Being imaginative and reflective by nature, he verily lived in that age. Therefore a strong revivalist tendency is present not only in his historical and mythological plays, but even in his 'Kāmanā' which is an allegorical drama. He thought of introducing the same divine atmosphere again in Indian life which was coloured in strong Western colour in his times. For this purpose he made historical researches and made full but careful use of archaeological evidence.

And Prasada has created that ancient Indian atmosphere in such a true and picturesque manner, that the Indian life of the Maurya, Gupta or Harsa's period actually presents itself before our eyes. All of a sudden we feel as if actually moving amidst those people, and living in those very conditions. Not only his setting of scenes is in conformity with those times, but even the names of characters, their dresses and habits, their character and conversation, the entire paraphernalia is in keeping with the time they reflect.

But that does not mean that modern age and life found no effect on Prasada's mind. Prasada was a keen observer of life, and his study of modern life was very deep. Accordingly we find the contemporary conditions and problems of the country clearly reflected in his plays. The characters of Candragupta and Skandagupta are glowing examples of patriotism. In their characters a direct appeal is made to the youth of the country to follow their ideals of patriotism. Again in 'Candragupta', the playwright has raised his voice against provincialism and communalism —

चाणक्य — "मालवा और मागध को भूल कर जब आर्यावर्त का नाम लोगे तभी यह मिलेगा।" "आक्रमणकारी बौद्ध और ब्राह्मणों में भेद न करेंगे।"

The following words of Saramā, in the Ist Act, 4th scene of 'Nāga-yajña' have an echo of Hindu-Muslim unity and sinking of all racial differences —

सरमा — सम्राज्ञी! मैं तो एक मनुष्य-जाति देखती हूं — न दस्यु और न आर्य! न्याय की सर्वत्र पूजा चाहती हूं — चाहे वह राजमंदिर में हो, या दरिद्र कुटीर में।

Similarly at numerous other places also we find a mature analysis of some of the contemporary religious, social and political problems. But, with his masterly skill and genius, Prasada has fitted these modern problems so nicely and aptly in ancient historical atmosphere, that sometimes they may not strike to an ordinary mind at first reading.

Prasada has strong belief in Providence 'Niyati' (Destiny or Providence) always hovers round his most leading characters, who feel themselves to be simply carrying out the commands of Destiny. All important characters like Candragupta, Skandgupta etc. make frequent references to 'Niyati' and attribute their successes or failures to it. But in spite of having full faith in Destiny, Prasada's characters do not sit idle like the Lotos-Eaters of Tennyson, waiting for the hand of Providence to support them or destroy them. They, on the other hand, descend on the highly busy stage of the world, take vigorous part in the battle of life, and sometimes achieve surprising success.

Still, there are certain leading characters like Cāṇakya who are much above the dread of or regard for Destiny. They possess so much self-confidence and firm will that they appear to be masters of their Destiny. Not only do they rise themselves with their firm will and integrity of character, but they raise others too along with themselves.

Further, we find that all the dramas of Prasada have a happy ending, but the playwright's conception of comedy is peculiar. A shadow of grief and the tragic hovers over his plays from the beginning to the end. Prasada's comedy is a combination of peace (Śānti) and renunciation (Vairagya). His mind was always reflecting upon the Indian philosophy which looks upon life as essentially full of happiness, and also on the Buddhistic philosophy, according to which life is full of woe and misery. As a result of this feeling, Prasada, although he has ended all his plays happily, has infused in them a penetrating note of sorrow, grief and torment.

The plays of Prasada are possessed of innumerable literary and artistic merits. But they are not altogether free from flaws. First of all, most of his plays are hard for the stage; they have defects of perform-ance in the sense that if their audience consits of ordinary people with

common ability and understanding, they are totally unfit for the stage. If they are performed before a very selected audience, highly educated and cultured, then they can be a very good success.

Moreover, there are certain scenes like those of battle etc., which are impossible for the stage. Prasada's difficult language and his lack of humour, greatly minimise the dramatic charm of his works. All the three unities have been violated, and particularly in his 'Candra-gupta' the unity of time has been terribly violated. Twenty-five or thirty years might have elapsed between the opening and the closing scenes of that drama. Again the author is, sometimes, so much involved in the maze of historical facts that he is lost in them. A careful study of his plays reveals that he has always subordinated characters to incidents in the plays. In his enthusiasm to uphold the objective facts of history which he reproduces in an embarrasing detail, he has sacrificed the more valuable features of plot-construction, characterisation, and naturalness of dialogue. Into the midst of historical facts he introduces long declamatory speeches which really express his own views. He has made a free use of the 'soliloquy' and the 'aside', and sometimes the characters take to singing in 'soliloquy' at most critical moments. Due to the rush of events and characters, it has been very difficult for the playwright, on several occasions, to hold his plot together. In such circumstances either the playwright suddenly introduces a new character, or dispenses with another altogether.

With the exception of his last play 'Dhruvaswāminī' (1934), Prasada has sub-divided the acts of all other plays into scenes. In his earlier plays, he has sub-divided the acts into scenes, and have named those scenes as 'Scene I' or 'Scene II' etc. In his later works he has dispensed with the word 'scene' and has simply put the figure 'One' 'Two' etc. in place of 'Scene I' 'Scene II' etc. In his last play 'Dharuvasvāminī', he has given up the very practice of dividing the acts into scene. 'Dhruvaswāminī' has only three acts, with no sub-division into scenes.

In the end we can say that inspite of all their defects, Prasada's plays are unique in Hindi literature. They are perhaps the greatest asset of Hindi drama, and Hindu culture. If they are not very fit for the common stage, then the real fact to blame is the absence of a standard

Hindi stage. We remember that Shakespeare wrote his plays for a special theatre. He always kept a particular stage in view while writing his dramas. And still some of his dramas suffer from stage defects, so much so that an authority like Charles Lamb went to the extent of saying that Shakespeare's plays were not meant for the stage. If then in the absence of any standard Hindi stage, Prasada's plays suffer from stage defects, he is certainly not very much to blame.

Chapter XIV.

FARCES AND SATIRES.

Although farces are very old in Sanskrit literature, yet in Hindi drama the ball was set rolling by Bharatendu who wrote 'Vaidikī Hiṃsā Hiṃsā na Bhavati' and 'Andhera Nagari'. After him several other writers wrote satires in which they strongly criticised social, political and religious evils. We had dealt with these farces in a previous chapter and have also shown that the Hindi farces have borrowed more from Western farces than Sanskrit Prahasanas, which were meant merely for laughter and had no satirical touch in them. The farce which continued its slow progress in the first phase of the twentieth century (1900-12), suddenly accelerated its speed in the second phase, i.e. the period under discussion (1912-30). And this looks very natural and reasonable too, when we cast a glance over the social, religious and political conditions of the country during these years. Satire will always flourish in a society which pretends to be over-civilized simply because of its copying a foreign civilization, where the artificial life of the country has driven people emotionally and morally to depart from elemental conditions and primitive impulse, where social evils and vices are rampant, when political unrest prevails and where false conventions and institutions of old outdated ideas still hold the sway.

Accordingly we find that the usual targets of these satirist are the Brahmanas and their scriptures, the Sadhus and their immoral, hypocritical lives, prostitutes and their faithlessness, the young girls and boys with their madness for the new fashions, the lawyers, doctors and physicians, with their strange modes of extracting money. Occasionally, the Rai Bahadurs and Honorary Magistrate also suffer the lashing of their satire.

These farces are mostly small in size and from the dramatic point of view they neither possess any skill of plot-construction nor any power of characterisation. They simply abound in melodramatic situations, vulgar

humour, forced satire and cheap entertainment. With no literary worth or dramatic finish, these farces, with their inconsistent characterisation, episodic plot and exaggerated portrayal of life, failed to be popular amongst the cultured people. But, although they have no significance in the history of Hindi drama, yet they paved the way for the realistic drama of the next period. They prepared the audience, to some extent, for the Problem Plays, which would have otherwise surprised or even shocked the general audience.

Of these farcical playwrights, G.P. Śrīvāstava[1] naturally calls for first attention. He has written largest number of farces, including translations, adaptations and original writings. To him belongs the credit of infusing a deeper and a stronger note in Hindi farce. Being intimately conversant with the life of his own time, knowing fully well the follies and foibles, the ills and evils of his society, he set out to sharply criticise and boisterously satirise those evils, all with a didactic purpose. He is very bold and blunt in his attacks and has a great power of revealing the chief evils and drawbacks of society, and sometimes he appears more as a preacher than a farcist. His farces, prompted as they were by local society and local incidents, have strong local touches. Still these touches are of such a kind that they can safely apply as well to the society outside Gondā, the native place of Śrīvāstava.

Śrīvastava started his career as a satirist with the Hindi translations and adaptations of Moliere's farces. Most of these farces are quite small in size. His 'Mār Mār Kar Hakīm'[2] is based on Moliere's 'Le Medecin Malgre Lui', which has been adapted by another writer Lallī Prasāda Pāndeya in his 'Thok Pīt Kar Vaidyarāja'[3]. It is a cheap farce in which a wood-cutter is beaten into a Hakim (physician), and the foolish people call upon him for the treatment of their relations. The author criticises those selfish fathers who try to give away their young daughters to old men in marriage out of greed for money. They set aside the youthful longings of their daughters and seek the remedy of their mental and pschological ailment in foolish treatment of forced physicians.

'Ankhon Men Dhūl'[4], which is an adaptation of Moliere's 'L' Amour Medecin' has a similar theme. Gobar Chand, the miserly father of Ketakī is

1. जी० पी० श्रीवास्तव. 2. मार मार कर हकीम. 3. ठोक पीट कर वैद्यराज. 4. आंखों में धूल

delaying the marriage of his daughter as it means spending a considerable amount of money. Further, he cannot tolerate that while he should take the pains of bringing up the girl, another man should take her away for enjoyment: as he says in the following:

गोबर चन्द — ..... अगर शादी करूं तो रुपये के रुपये दूं और लड़की से भी हाथ धोऊँ। ......
पाला-पोसा, बड़ा किया मैंने और जब वह किसी लायक हुई तो फ़ायदा उठाये
कोई और। ऐसा गोबर चन्द मूर्ख नहीं। (Act I scene 5)

He wants to throw dust in the eyes of society, of his daughter and her lover, but is himself befooled in such a way that the marriage is performed by his own self through the cleverness of the other party. In this play again the author emphasizes the necessity of suitable and timely marriage in the following words of heroine's friend —

चंचल — अगर माली को इसका कुछ भी ख्याल होता, तो वह खुद ही आज इसका गुलदस्ता
बनाकर किसी शौकीन के हाथ में देता; क्योंकि सुबह तक इसकी हालत और
ही हो जायेगी। न यह यौवन होगा और न यह सुरत होगी।

In 'Havāī Doctor' which is based on Moliere's 'Le Medecin Volant', the author again strongly revolts against the marriage of young girls with old husbands. In this play Ghanacakkar very nicely plays the double role of a doctor and his discarded brother. The scene where he befools the miserly Gobarchand by his double role is very interesting and humorous. 'Sahib Bahadur or[2] Chaddhā Gul Kheru' is another very interesting farce based on Moliere's 'Le Bourgoise Gentilhomme'. In this play the character of the foolish and fashinable Majāmat Beg is very amusing. From the beginning to the end, the play is replete with highly comical scenes, and the humour is refined and genuine.

In addition to his adaptations of Moliere's farces, G.P. Srivastava has written a number or original farces which are decidedly superior to his adaptations in every respect. 'Dumdār[3] Ādmī' 'Mardānī[4] Aurat' 'Ulaṭ[5] Pher' and 'Nok Jhonk[6]' are some of his famous farcical plays. In 'Dumdār Ādmī' the author lashes his satire against the lawyers and ridicules their ways of life, their feigned pride, their dull lives and their ignorance of the world affairs. In the following words, the author delineates the picture of a lawyer —

[निपोड़शंख — एक बड़ी सी दुम लगाये हुए जिसके आखिरी हिस्से में अंग्रेजी में मोटे २ अक्षरों में B.A. B.Sc. LL.B. दोनों तरफ़ लिखे हुए हैं, एक पैर में चूड़ीदार पैजामा दूसरे में ढीली मोहरी का पैजामा पहने, उल्टी अचकन पहने, एक बड़े डण्डे पर सवार, एक जूता लिये डण्डे को पीटते हुए प्रवेश करते हैं] (Act 1 scene 1)

'Gaḍabaḍa Jhālā'[1] is one of the best original farces of Srivastava. In the very opening soliloquy of 'Bigadedila' the author sums up all the contemporary evils that he wants to critcise —

बिगड़े दिल — (आपही आप) कुछ कहा नहीं जाता। जमाने की हवा ही बदल गई। मर्द जनाने हो गये। औरतें मरदानी हो गई। लड़के सयाने होगये। सयाने नादान बच्चे हो गये। जवानों में बुढ़ापा आ गया। बुढापें में नये सिरे से नौजवानी समा गई। पचास बरस वाले तेरह बरस की कुमारियों की ताक में हैं। ..... खूबसूरत लड़कियां बूढ़ों से नहीं बचने पाती। इनके लिये न टीपन को झगड़ा न ग्रह का बखेड़ा। चट मंगनी पट ब्याह। ..... नौजवानों के लिये सौ २ मुसीबतें। पण्डितों का विचार, ग्रह मिलान .. . etc.

In the following words the author emphatically denies the claim of old men upon young girls —

बिगड़े० — बला से। मगर सड़ी हुई लाश को खाने वाले गीदड़ों और कुत्तों को गुलाब का फूल नहीं मिल सकता। अगर भौरां न मिले या बुल बुल न हो तो कुछ परवाह नहीं। फूल अपनी टहनी पर सूख के मुर्झा जायेगा।

The theme of the play is the selfishness of an old man who, although his first old wife is alive, wants to marry a beautiful young girl, and though of strict orthodox views is ready to set aside all consideration of horoscopes and conventions. Just as he wants to prey upon the young girl merely for the satisfaction of his mean old sensual thirst, in the same way his young son Kambakhat[3] lal, who is already married, pines for the same girl for the satisfaction of his lust. Kambakht lal is an un-scrupluous epicurean who always wants fresh birds, after the first is spoiled by over-use —

कम्बख्त — जिन्दगी मज़ा करने के लिये है न कि दुःख उठाने के लिये ..... बगल में नाजनी होगी, मुंह में शराब की बोतल होगी और सामने रंडियां नाचती होंगी। औरत मर्द के लिये बनाई गई है। जहां एक से तबियत घबड़ाई फौरन उसको धत्ता बताई और दूसरी घर में आई ..... सलामती चाहिए अपनी जवानी की। कहीं औरतों की कमी है? औरतें तो जूतियां हैं। जब ज़रा पुरानी हुई चट बदल दी। (Act I Scene 2)

At last Buddhu, their servant, comes to the rescue of the girl's guardians. He enhances the effect of humour by acting at the same time the wife of both the son and the father. The old man who is conscious of his age shows his servility to the young wife and preaches her the lesson of पातिधर्म. In fact in the following words of the old man the author means

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1. गड़बड़ झाला. 2. बिगड़े दिल. 3. कम्बख्तलाल.

'Jatabase Jhāgā' is one of the best original farces of Priyamvada. In the very opening colloquy of 'Bishadtila' the author sums up all the contemporary evils that he wants to criticise —

[illegible]

In the following words the author emphatically decries the claim of old man upon young girls —

[illegible]

The theme of the play is the selfishness of an old man who, although his first old wife is alive, wants to marry a beautiful young girl, and though of strict orthodox views is ready to set aside all considerations of horoscopes and conventions. Just as he wants to prey upon the young girl merely for the satisfaction of his own old sensual thirst, in the same way his young son Lambakhat Lal, who is already married, urges for the same girl for the satisfaction of his lust. Lambakhat Lal is an un-scrupulous voluptuary who always wants fresh girls, after the first is spoiled by over use —

[illegible]

At last Bhutnath, their servant, comes to the rescue of the [illegible] complications. He enhances the effect of humour by making [illegible] wife of both the men and [illegible]. The old man who is [illegible] and prove his servility to the young wife [illegible] [illegible] in fact in the [illegible]

[illegible]

to criticise the false and callous code of पातिव्रतधर्म for a wife, which means nothing short of a complete sacrifice of all her desires and longings—

मनहूस – प्यारी, औरत के लिये उसका पति ही सब कुछ है। चाहे लंगड़ा हो, लूला हो, या ज़रा बूढ़ा भी हो। उसी की तन्मन से सेवा करने से औरत को बैकुण्ठ में जा सकती है।

(Act I Scene 3)

The humour reaches the highest pitch when both father and son come face to face with each other in the presence of the young girl. Each of them claims the young girl to be his wife. At this very moments the real wedded wives of both the son and the father arrive on the scene, and start beating their respective husbands, and then each other. In this confusion the father carries away his son's wife with him taking her as his own wife, and the son drags away his mother as his own wife.

The author's humour, full of satire as it is, does not culminate here. When the girl (who is infact their servant Buddhu in man's guise) confesses to be the wife of both the father and the son, they take her to be mad, and call for a doctor for her treatment. No sooner the doctor looks at the 'girl', he develops a weakness for her. The author appears to satirise the low morals of men, who are always in search of hunting beautiful young girls by every means. In the end Buddhu appears in his real form and the father, son and the doctor all are put to shame for their conduct.

Srivastava has written several other interesting farces including 'Kursi-Man', ' Nā Ghar Kā nā ghāṭ kā' 'Sāhitya Kā Sapūta' etc. In the last named farce the author has made an attempt to satirise the conservative tendencies in language, humour and poetry from the modern standpoint. A love theme has been introduced to add colour and variety to the play. Sansārī represents the modern tendency in literature while Sāhityānanda stands for the old pedants in literature. The former loves the daughter of the latter and in overcoming the obstacles that impede the fulfilment of his object, the author provides many comic and farcical situations.

As compared with Badri Nath Bhatta and Ugra, Srivastava's humour looks cheaper, less artistic and vulgar. The author has tried to produce the comic effect from the very naming of his characters; e.g. टर्रे खां; घबड़ाहट मल्ल; मुठभेड़ चन्द, मनहूस लाल, कम्बख्त लाल, हजामत बेग; गड़बड़, रमचोखा, सत्यनाशी, फोटक राय. etc.

1. कुरसी मैन. 2. ना घर का ना घाट का. 3. साहित्य का सपूत.

Badri Nath Bhatta has written only a few humorous plays, but his humour is certainly superior to that of Srivastava. Of his farces, 'Vivāha Vijñāpana'[1] 'Miss American'[2], 'Labaḍa Dhondhon'[3] and 'Cuṅgī Kī Ummedawārī'[4] are more popular. In Vivāha-Vijñāpana (1927) he narrates the story of a widower who resorts to advertisement (Vijñapana) for his second marriage. The wording of the advertisement and manipulation of situations in the play are such that they are bound to provoke fun and laughter. The cheap fun reaches its climax when the letter containing the matrimonial proposal is beaten with a shoe. In the end the proposed couple is duly married, but the anxious suitor is horrified to find that the bride is an old woman without teeth, nose and hair. All these were artificial and made up; but then it was too late. In this play the writer has indirectly cast a slur on the western ideal of artificial make-up and form, and the craving of second marriage in hearts of sufficiently grown up men.

'Miss America' (1929) is another important farce of Bhatta in which he has attempted to ridicule the west and its civilization. The American characters represent Westernism in the play. Theydo not stand by anything in life, except money which is their religion. Their daughter may marry any person, provided it brings them money. They do not understand the spiritual culture of the East as they are blinded by a veil of gross materialism. At the same time they suffer from a colour prejudice. Bohārī Lāl, who represents the civilization of the East does not like his own society. In Hindu society women do not enjoy any status. Again, in his opinion, Hindus are Jews and a community of liars. In Bohārī Lāl's character the poet also seems to satirise the tendency in the Erotic school of poetry for the deep delight which its writers took in the unaesthetic and even vulgar expression of beauty. A notable feature of this farce is that the writer has considerably cut down the number of characters. Only five male and three female characters of significance have been introduced in the play.

In addition to the farces of G.P. Srivastava and Badri Nath Bhatta, Sudarśana's 'Honorary Magistrate' and Ugra's 'Ujabaka'[4] and 'Cāra Becāre'[5] are also very interesting farces. Some minor writers also have added a few more farces to Hindi literature, but they do not deserve an individual consideration. In all these farces several means have been adopted in order

1. विवाह-विज्ञापन. 2. लबड़ धोंधों. 3. चुङ्गी की उम्मेदवारी. 4. उजबक. 5. चार बेचारे.

to produce fun and excite laughter. First of all, most of the characters are given very humorous and even ridiculous names as shown above, e.g.

गोबचन्द; बंटाधार; संठ; हजामत बेग; गड़बड़; मनहूस लाल; बिगड़े दिल etc.

secondly, the diction of these plays is humorous; words and phrases are so selected and placed in such an order that their mere utterance excites laughter: e.g. 'Dumdār Ādmī' Act I scene 2 —

सर्वदानन्द — आप चाहे वकील हों या बैरिस्टर —
अलबेले — मादा हों या नर —
रंगीले — घोड़ा हों या खर —
गुलज़ार — आदमी हों या बन्दर —
घबराहट — हकीम हों या डाक्टर —
सर्वदानन्द — मुन्सिफ हों या डिप्टी - कलेक्टर etc.

Or in 'Mār Mār Kar Hakīm' Act I, scene 1.

टर्रेखां — या अल्ला। बचाइयो चांद गंजी कर देने वाली जोरुओं की जूतियों से। यारो, शादी वही करे जिसकी हो खोपड़ी लोहे की। नहीं तो जहां दो - एक कस कर पड़ीं, बस पिलपिली हो गई सारी खोपड़ी — etc.

A similar type of humour is introduced in the following lines of 'Labad Dhondhon'

हाकिम — तू अच्छी तरह नौकरी बजा सकेगा?
नौकर — क्या घंटा बजाने की नौकरी? हज़ूर मेरा क्या जाता है आप कहेंगे तो दिन रात घण्टे बजाया करूंगा।
हा० — अबे बेवकूफ़।
नौ० — (आप ही आप) एक सख्ती फिटक तो मिला।
हा० — घण्टा - वण्टा कुछ नहीं; तू सब काम संभाल लेगा?
नौ० — जी हां, क्यों नहीं। मैं क्या आदमी नहीं हूं? आदमी का काम आदमी न संभालेगा तो क्या जानवर संभालेंगे। etc.

In several cases the authors have put various dialects in the mouths of different characters. This use of dialects makes the dialogue very amusing and sometimes humorous, as the particular way of pronunciation of such character excites laughter: e.g.

धौकल दास — जदी मेरे को पूछोगे तो भाई मेरी शमझ में जेई आवे से, कि लला लुगाई शुशरी गहणोई शो खुश होय से। हमनने अपनी जोरुआ की जाई तेरे से राजी राखे से। वो रांड तो बहुत बके भाके से। छे छे फीट की जुती से बात करे से। (Ankhon Men Dhūl; Act I scene 1)

Or again in 'Mardānī Aurat' the editor's speaking श in place of स excites laughter —

to produce fun and excite laughter. First of all, most of the characters are given very humorous and even ridiculous names as shown above, e.g.

[illegible]

Secondly, the diction of these plays is humorous words and phrases are so selected and placed in such an order that their mere utterance excites laughter; e.g. 'Dundar [illegible]' Act I Scene 2 —

[illegible]

~~Here the [illegible]~~

Or in '[illegible]' Act I, scene 1.

[illegible]

A similar type of humour is introduced in the following lines of '[illegible]'

[illegible]

In several cases the authors have put various dialects in the mouths of different characters. This use of dialects makes the dialogue very amusing and sometimes humorous, as the particular use of provincial [illegible] of such character excites laughter, e.g.

[illegible]

(Act I Scene 2)

[illegible] in '[illegible]' the [illegible] of [illegible] —

बंटाधार — तभी तो सम्पादक बन गये। लेखक बनते तो लेख लिखना पड़ता, कवि बनते तो कविता करनी पड़ती, और सम्पादक बनने में मज़े हैं। से बैठे रघजलूट कर तोंद फुलानी पड़ती है, और मुफ़्त के साहित्य के सपूत कहलाते हैं। जब से सम्पादक बने हैं तब से ग्यारह ग्यारह इंच तोंद बढ़ गई है। चाहे नाप के देख लो।

(Act I, Scene 5)

In 'Ujabak' the dialogue of the two poet, Lantha and Santha is very humorous-

e.g. लंठ — मेरा कहना है ब्रज भाषा मोस्टर्डी है,
खाखां का गद्दी है
नूतनता मौलिकता — हीन है
दीन प्रन बीन है
और स्वच्छन्द मेरा रागघटक है —
छन्द जो खड़ा है।
old ब्रज भाषा में कलंक है सुलंक है
(डर्टी) पर्यंक है
कामिनी है कुच है, कालिन्दी का किनारा है,
तेरहवीं सदी की गण्डकी की गन्दी धारा है। etc.

संठ — (लंठ को ललकार कर)
रुको! रुको! मत क्रोध दिलाओ,
झुको! झुको! मत बात बढ़ाओ
अब मत राग बेसुरा गाओ,
ससुर बनो सुर को अपनाओ। etc.

The following is again an extract of humorous dialogue (Mardānī Aurat) (III, I)

गड़बड़ — हां देखता तो हूँ दुनिया भर के ऐबों से भरे मालूम होते हो।

पक्षपाती — तभी तो समालोचक हुए। जब तक अपने में ऐब न होंगे, दूसरे में क्या ख़ाक ऐब निकालेंगे?

गड़बड़ — अच्छा तो आप ऐब ही ऐब देखते हैं; और गुण?

पक्षपाती — गुण कैसे दिखाई पड़े जी। गुण को देखने वाली आंख तो फोड़ डाली है ऐब वाली रख छोड़ी है देखने नहीं करने हैं।

In addition to this, boisterous humour is frequently produced as a result of melodramatic scenes and funny situations. For instance, in 'Mardānī Aurat' the editor Bantādhār hides himself in a bag, which is auctioned out to Sukhiyā for one hundred rupees. When, one opening the bag, Bantādhār comes out and is presently given a severe beating, the audience cannot stop their laughter. Similarly, in the 2nd act, third scene of the same play, when a cowherd who is suffering from nyctalopia (night-blindness) beats Petū Lāl and Bantādhār taking them both to be his lost buffaloes, the scene become boisterously funny:-

(एक अहीर का डण्डा लिये हुए आना)

अहीर — न जाने मोर भैंसीयें कहां तुड़ाय के गयीं। तब कहां जायी ढूंढे। रतौंधी

होता है। मले सूझ नहीं पड़त है। हो लेपो! जानो समजबे दुनों ठाढ़ हैं। मले मिलि गयीं। आओ भू-ऊ-रि! (डण्डा से पेटूलाल और बण्टा धार की तोंद पर मारता है) अरे! चल नहीं कोई कानीज़हउस मां कीरपाय देपी। अरे भाग चल। तक! तक! तक! (पीछे दुम पकड़ने के लिये हाथ बढ़ाता है) अरे! पीछिया कवन कसाई काट लइगा। हो लियो सिंघ या कहुं तोडाय आइस। हाय दादा! (मारता है)

(पेटूलाल और बण्टाधार घबरा कर भाग जाते हैं। पीछे अहीर मारता हुआ जाता है।)

In the same way the scene of Budhu's playing the part of the beloved of both the father and the son, and at the same moment the appearance of their real wives on the spot is very humorous. Again in (Act II, Scene 2 of) 'Mardānī Aurat' the following situation is very funny -

(पेटूलाल गर्भानन्द बड़ी सी तोंद फुलाये एक तरफ़ से आता है। दूसरी तरफ़ से बण्टा धार आता है। दोनों की तोंदें लड़ जाती हैं।)

बण्टा० — अरे बाप रे बाप तोंद फूट गयी।

पेटू० — अरर माल गाडी लड़ गई।

बण्टा० — कौन पूरणवाले? पर यह कौनसा रोग है तुम्हें। बदन भर में गर्मी ही गर्मी!

In this way we find that although these farces abound in boisterous and cheap humour, yet their humour has not much of refind taste in it. Especially the humour of G.P. Srivastava is decidedly of a very cheap nature. In order to excite laughter he often descends to the improbable, the unnatural and the unreal. Beautiful situations of genuine laughter are not lacking in the works of 'Ugra' and Bhatta, but these writers have written a very limited number of farces. As most of the farces of Hindi literature afford only cheap laughter and rustic fun, they have not appealed to the learned men with refined and cultured taste. Nor have the cheap farcicists found many successors in the subsequent period.

B. Realistic Tendency (Problem Plays)

The farces and satires were dramas dealing with contemporary problems of society and religion in their own way. With the potent yet pleasant weapon of humour and irony, they struck hard those social, religious and domestic evils which their authors thought to be most baneful for society. In addition to these farcical dramas, a number of serious plays were also written in this period on contemporary problems and evils. While the farces

presented an exaggerated view of life in order to excite laughter, these serious plays presented a real picture of society, faithfully delineating all sides of the pictures. Occasionally, humour, and that too of a refined nature, has been introduced in these plays. In fact these plays serve as precursors to the strong realistic tendency which resulted in the production of a large number of problem plays in the next period, in imitation of the West. These plays, although they have not very much the same atmosphere and discipline as the realistic plays of the next period, or the problem plays of the West, yet they are essentially problem plays, with a more or less realistic atmosphere and dealing with contemporary evils and problems. In fact in these dramas we behold the glimpses of the realistic tendency which shone forth in the succeeding period. Some of these plays, that can claim a mention here are 'Netronmīlan'[1] by Miśra brothers, 'Saṅgrāma'[2] of Prem Chand, 'Ghulāmī Kā Nashā'[3] of Lakshman Sinha, 'Parivartan'[4] of Kathāvāchak, 'Madhura-Milana'[5] of Jagannātha Prasāda Caturvedi, 'Pāpa-Pariṇāma'[6] of Jamuna Dāsa Mehrā, and 'Samāja'[7] of Ghanananda, the last-named being perhaps the best of all these plays.

In 'Netronmīlan' we find an interesting description of the atmosphere and defects of the courts, and the evils of bringing cases there. 'Ghulāmī Kā Nashā' and 'Bhārata - Darpana' are political plays and their plot is based on the slavery of the country, and the Satyāgraha movement for the achievement of freedom. 'Pāpa-Pariṇāma', is one of the most popular social drama, and it betrays a clear impression of Girish Ghosh's famous play, 'Gṛha Lakṣmī'. Kalidasa, the hero of this play falls in bad company and begin to love Razia, who is a market beauty. At her instance he murders his father, and hands over all his belongings to the lady of his love. But in the end Razia proves faithless and Kalidasa is kicked out of her house. Now the man comes to his senses, and with the efforts of his virtuous wife turns into a noble man. His younger sister Kamalā who is married to Madana, develops a weakness for Hari Kishore, a neighbour. To make the theme still more complicated, another man Hīrananda catches a fancy for Kamalā. Hari Kishore is at the point of killing Madana, but the timely arrival of Kalidasa with his servant and friend saves his life, and Hari Kishore is arrested. The atmosphere of this social play is realistic and the characters have been given a real and natural colour. The play

1. नेत्रोन्मीलन . 2. संग्राम 3. गुलामी का नशा . 4. परिवर्तन 5. मधुर-मिलन . 6. पाप-परिणाम . 7. समाज

also throws light on several social evils and warns the society against their natural consequences.

Prem Chand's 'Sangrama' (1922) is another social drama in five acts and 37 scenes. Its plot is also somewhat similar to the other social plays of this period, the only difference being that the stage of this play is set amidst the farmers of villages. The author has shown partiality to the poorer characters and have tried to paint them in glowing colours. He has pulled down the wealthy class and have attributed them all horrible sins and crimes. Several events of the play are highly improbable and unnatural. The drama gives proof of nothing but the author's zeal to run down the capitalist class and raise the poor high in the esteem of the audience. The plot of other social plays mentioned above is similar to that of 'Pāpa-Parināma' Generally the hero abandons his faithful wife, goes after some prostitute or any other woman, brings ruin to his property and himself, and in the end realizes his mistake due to some sacrifice of his devoted wife, mends his ways and thereby leads a happy life.

'Samāja' (1930) of Ghanānanda launches a vigorous compaign against the evil of untouchability. Without much artistic claims, the play still ranks among the best social plays of this period. Viśuddhānanda represents the radical class, while Dhanadāsa stands for the conservative mass in society. In the opening scene, these opposite tendencies are expressed in a trenchant dialogue. Viśuddhānanda pleads that in God 's eyes all are equal, while Dhanadāsa holds that to break the social order sanctioned by divinity is a sin:-

विशुद्ध० — नहीं महाशय, ईश्वर की दृष्टि में सब समान हैं। समानता ही ईश्वरीय नियम है। अछूतों को अछूत और पतितों को पतित बनाने वाले हम हैं, न कि ईश्वर। उस पतित-पावन को तो दीन दुःखी ही प्यारे हैं। . . . . .

धनदास — . . . . अपने पूर्व-संचित पापों का दण्ड भोगने के लिये ईश्वर ने उनको दलित जाति में जन्म दिया है, उनकी सहायता करना पाप नहीं तो क्या है ? यह तो ईश्वरीय विधान में बाधा डालना है !

In addition to untouchability, the playwright has cast a slur on early-marriage too:-

पड़ोसिन — . . . . . . बारह वर्ष से बड़ी लड़की को बिना ब्याहे रखना तो पाप है। ऐसा करके कौन अपनी जाति खोयेगा और पितरों को नरक में पहुंचायेगा ? हमारी बिरादरी में तो बारह वर्ष से बड़ी बिना ब्याही लड़की मिलनी असंभव है। (Act I scene 2)

Gyān (Jñāna) Prakāśa, a young man of radical views has taken a vow of calibacy, but at the sight of an " untouchable" girl (who in fact belongs to a high caste) begins to love her. His orthodox father Haridāsa cannot tolerate this thing and consequently the son is banished. Very touching is the scene when Gyan Prakash, turned out of his father's home, seaks farewell of his simple-hearted beloved who makes an open confession of her deep love for him. Equally touching is the scene where the mother and sister of Gyan Prakash go to see that "untouchable" girl, talk to her without disclosing their identity and are simple enamoured of that lovely girl's nobility and simplicity of talk and manners. The mother who was perhaps more orthodox than the father suddenly changes her creed and is prepared to accept the girl as her daughter-in-law. With great emphasis she remarks —

लक्ष्मी — मैंने उस लड़की को कभी देखा नहीं, पर मेरे बच्चे को अगर उससे सुख मिल सकता है, तो मैं घर में क्या उसे सर आखों में रखती। तुम्हारी तरह मैं जाति को अपने सिर पर बांध कर नहीं फिरती। मेरी जाति तो मेरा पुत्र था। उसके बिना मुझे संसार की जातियां लेकर क्या करना है? (Act II scene 4)

But the father is totally blinded by his conservative zeal, and in the end, having lost all due to his foolishness of faith, he is turned out of his own home: Then he realizes that his son was on the right, repents for his tyranny towards him, loses his eyes in weeping and in the end the parents and the children accidentally meet and 'Śāntā' (the"untouchable" girl) is married to Gyan.

To the main theme have been tagged some of the minor social problems of child-marriage, intercaste marriage, the institution of beggary, and the problem of the new bourgeoisie class ~~and~~ aiming at prudery and a blind imitation of Western manners. The author has pointed the so-called 'Uptodate club' in worst possible colours, as all its members are rogues, knaves and debauches.

Although the characters of 'Śāntā and Gyan Prakash and his mother have some individuality in them, yet most of the other characters are no more than types. Viśuddhānanda is a typical social reformer who is wedded to his cause. Gyan Prakash belongs to the same type of men but the human side is shown by his response to the love of Śāntā. Yār Alī, the epicure, is the villain of the play. Haridāsa stands a symbol of orthodox Hindi ideo-

logy. The author has shown sufficient skill in plot construction, but the ending of the play has been made melodramatic by the incidental union between all the principal characters of the play, separated and lost long ago. The playwright would have enhanced this melodramatic effect had he brought the villains also on the stage and made them feel sorry for their conduct. However, this purpose is served by the respective news that has been brought about each one of them by Viśuddhānanda.

In his foreward to this play P. Sheshadri has explained the reason for the inartistic and unrealistic ending of the play in the following words

"If the author is still somewhat under the glamour of romance and the incidents in his play shape themselves in the end in a manner convenient to the artist and not as they generally turn out in the real world, it must be remembered that he is still young and he has not yet had opportunities of delving into the profundities of life."

Chapter XV

ALLEGORICAL DRAMA.

The different types of drama that we have discussed in the foregoing chapters were liked by different types of audience, largely varying in number. In addition to these kinds of drama, another type of drama also came into existence, not so much due to the liking and taste of the audience but more so due to the longing of some talented playwrights who sought to revive this type of drama, which existed in Sanskrit literature, in Hindi literature also.

The allegorical drama, with which we are concerned in this chapter, is common to all ages and all lands. It is an easy and effective means of the analysis of ethical canons and moral principles. Although our Upanisads, the Mahabharata and lot of other literature are allegorical to a great extent, yet the first and the most famous allegorical drama of Sanskrit is 'Prabodha Candrodaya'. In English literature Spenser's Fairie Queene' and 'Pilgrims' Progress' are two famous allegorical works. In Hindi, various translations of 'Prabodha Candrodaya' appeared in the eighteenth and ninteenth centuries. The 'Deva-māyā-prapañca-nāṭaka' of Deva was another allegorical drama written on the lines of the famous Sanskrit play. The problem plays of the modern period (with which we shall deal in the succeeding chapters) are also a sort of allegorical drama, especially those in which the characters have no independent individuality and are more types and symbols of different virtues qualities and convictions.

The only important allegorical drama of this period is Prasada's 'Kāmanā'[1]. As in his historical dramas, so also in this allegorical drama, the author is prompted by a strong feeling of cultural revival. The play also strikes a strong note of contrast between the materialism of the West, and sublime spiritualism of the East, and the ultimate success of the latter.

1. कामना

The simple theme of the drama is to emphasize the divine joy of natural, innocent, care-free life on one hand, and the woes and miseries that usually follow a libertine life.

The stage of the play is set in a floral island, which abounds in bliss and the people whereof have descended from the stars. The people of this island are innocent, unsophisticated, and enamoured of their romantic, but natural surroundings; e.g.

सन्तोष — ..... ये हरे भरे खेत, छोटी-छोटी पहाड़ियों से ढुलकते हुए झरने, फूलों से लदे हुए वृक्षों की पंक्ति, भोली गउओं और उनके प्यारे बच्चों के झुंड! इस बीहड़, पागल और कुछ न समझने वाले उन्मत्त समुद्र में कहां मिलेंगे। ऐसी चवल धूप ऐसी तारों से जगमगाती रात वहां होगी? (Act I Scene I)

One day a foreign youth, Vilāsa, accidently embarks on that island; He has plenty of gold with him, which attracts Kāmanā (human desire). The foreigner is surprised to note the strange qualities of these people.

विलास — आश्चर्य! कैसी प्रकृति से मिली हुई जाति है। महत्व और आकांक्षा का अभाव और संघर्ष का लेश भी नहीं है। जैसे शैल-निवासिनी सरिता, पथ के विषम ढोकों को, विघ्न-बाधाओं को भी अपने सम और सरल प्रवाह तथा तरल गीत से ढंकती हुई बहती रहती है, उसी प्रकार यह जाति, जीवन की वक्र रेखाओं को सीधा करती हुई, अस्तित्व का उपभोग हंसती हुई कर लेती है। ..... (Act I Scene 3)

All of a sudden Vilāsa is fired with the emotion of ruling over this innocent tribe. Presently his ambition appears before him in the form of a woman and instructs him to introduce gold and wine in that island for his purpose. The greed of gold and the intoxicant effect of wine leads to mutual jealousies and hostilities, and crime gets rampant. Kāmanā, the queen of the floral island who was drawn towards Vilāsa for his wealth and wine, is now horrified at the sudden rush of crimes. For a moment she is at her wit's end to know the cause of all this change, but soon she realises her mistake and decides to boycott the foreign goods and to resort to their own simple methods. In the end she marries Santoṣa and the foreigner is driven out of the island with all his gold.

In this play Prasāda has portrayed the picture of the eternal conflict between materialism and spiritulism. The closing scene draws a glowing contrast between materialism that tosses in the turmoil of an angry ocean and spiritualism that blooms with bliss and glory.

(परिवर्तित दृश्य। समुद्र में नौका पर विलास और लालसा। सब नागरिक उसपर स्वर्ण फेंकते हैं। नाव डगमगाती है, लालसा का क्रन्दन — 'सोने से नाव डूबी, सब नहीं बस'। तुमुल तरंग। परिवर्तित दृश्य में अन्धकार। दूसरी ओर आलोक। फूलों की वर्षा।)

In the following words of Viveka, the playwright sharply criticises the so-called modern 'civilization', which, he feels, is much worse than their past culture:

विवेक — ....लोहू के प्यासे भेड़ियो, तुम जब बर्बर थे, तब क्या इससे बुरे थे? तुम पहले इससे भी क्या विशेष असभ्य थे? आज शासन-सभा का आयोजन करके सभ्य कहलाने वाले पशुओं, कल का तुम्हारा धुंधला अतीत इससे उज्ज्वल था। (Act II scene 8)

Kāmanā, the heroine of the play is the queen of man's mental world; she is his fickle, ever-changing desire. By making her drawn towards Vilāsa in the beginning, but married in the end to Santoṣa the author has tried to prove that the only satisfaction of human desire (Kāmanā), pine however it may for epicureanism (Vilāsa), really lies in contentment (Santoṣa). By coupling Vilāsa and Lālasā together, in the end, the playwright means that it is only man's momentary greed (Lālasā) that can be satisfied with Vilāsa, and not his Kāmanā. Kamanā's bowing before Vilāsa and Lālasā leads her into a series of trials and tribulations, but in the end she realizes her real self and abandons their company. The moment her two friends — Vilāsa and Lālasā — are driven out of the floral island, there is all peace restored there. This means that with the banishing of Vilāsa and Lālasā from man's nature there will be all happiness for him. In the same way other characters like Līlā, Vinod, Viveka etc. have their significance in the play.

~~Therexwillxbexallxhappinessxxxm~~

Like other plays of Prasada, 'Kāmanā' too has a happy ending; but, like them, this too has a penetrating note of sorrow. In giving happy ending to this play, Prasada is not only carrying out the classical canons, but also the whims of his own mind. Life, to him, consisted essentially of joy; moreover, by giving a tragic ending to this play he would have meant the victory of materialism and the defeat and destruction of spiritualism; the overthrow of the Indian ideals and the glorification of the West. And this was entirely contrary to Prasada's aim and purpose. He means to uphold the Indian culture and spiritualism; materialism, in his opinion, surely leads to chaos and crime, ultimately leading to destruction. Not only had a tragic-ending spoiled the play altogether, it would have certainly injured Prasada's feelings too. In this respect we totally disagree with Dr. Nagendra when the latter says that the happy-ending of the play is not a natural but a forced ending and that a tragic ending would have proved

much better.

The plot has been well-constructed by the playwright. The characters, although they are symbols , are not mere abstractions. They have sufficient flesh on them, and some of them appear to be concrete persons than mere abstract qualities. The characters of Kāmanā and Vilāsa have been well-drawn, and both of them appear to be human beings, possessed of their respective ambitions and failings. The character of Viveka is very powerful, while that of Lālasā is very fickel and infirm. The playwright has not very much succeeded in drawing a clear and bold line of demarcation between Kāmanā and Lālasā; in this respect Kāmanā's character is under-developed and not clearly differentiated from that of Lālasā. Other characters like Dambha, Durvṛta, Karuna etc. simply represent their respective qualities.

The atmosphere of the play is highly romantic; it abounds in romantic scenes of the floral island. The play has three acts, sub-divided into scenes. None of the scenes begins with lengthy stage-directions, which we find in Prasada's last play 'Dhruvasvāminī'. Most of the scenes begin straightaway with conversation without a single word of stage-directions. Like his other plays, there is ample force and flow in dialogue, which is less poetical and much less philosophical than the conversation of Prasada's historical plays. Although the play deals with the conflict of various emotions and human feelings — all abstract qualities — yet it has a sustained interest and is not boring anywhere. The speeches are shorter and the language is comparatively simpler. Songs have been occasionally intersperse and some of them have the warmth and throbbing of youthful emotions. For example, the following song of Kāmanā is overflowing with emotion —

कामना — . . . .

बरस चुकीं रस-बूंद सरस हो
फिर भी यह मन कुम्हलाया।
उमड़ ~~चली~~ चले आंखों के झरने,
हृदय न शीतल हो पाया।

(Act 1 Scene 5)

1. Ādhunika Hindi Nāṭaka' (1947) by Dr. Nagendra, page 86.

Chapter XVI HINDI DRAMA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (contd.)

THE MODERN PERIOD
(1930-48).

Various Tendencies.

Although Hindi drama rose very late, yet the start that it made was very promising. The very opening phase of Hindi drama, with Bharatendu as the most outstanding playwright, was sufficiently rich in different types of drama. But with the death of Bharatendu, our drama speedily declined and towards the closing years of the ninteenth century, reached a state of perfect standstill. This depression continued till the year 1912 when we enter upon a new phase, more flourishing and exuberant than the opening phase of drama. The colossal personality of Prasada dominated this period, although gifted playwrights like Milinda, Ugra and others also made their respective contributions. But unlike the opening phase which relapsed into a standstill, this rich phase of Hindi drama was succeeded by a still more rich and prosperous phase. Some of the old forms died out while several others made their graceful appearance. The influence of the classical dramaturgy minimised, while the western technique and ideas began to dominate. Western playwrights began to be studied with greater interest and effect: Ibsen and Shaw became the heroes of the Hindi playwright.

Proceeding with the different types of drama one by one, we find that the popular medieval performances like the 'Rasa-lila', 'Rama-lila' and the 'Nautanki' which were very popular in the ninteenth century and held their ground even in the first quarter of the twentieth, now ceased to please the masses. 'Nautankis' totally passed into oblivion; Rasa-lila was strictly restricted to the land of its birth, and Rama-lila lost all its life and charm, although it still survived in certain parts of the country.

The Parsi theatrical dramas which had been extremely popular so far, now suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the 'movies' and the 'talkies These talkies, which were far superior to the Parsidramas, and which provided equally great entertainment of the audience, left no audience for them. In every big town one or more cinema-halls were established and the touring talkies visited smaller towns so that the people of the towns also soon turned to the talkies. These talkies gave a death blow not only to the Parsi theatrical dramas, but to the literary drama also. The screen began to quickly replace the stage in all places, and even today it is no less a potent threat to the very existence of the stage. With a few exceptions, all the people are today running amuck after talkies.

This great popularity of the screen influenced the literary drama too. Screen tactics and scenes of cinema began to appear in these plays, as we shall show in later chapters. While in the ninteenth century the literary drama bore impressions of 'Rasa-lila' and 'Nautanki', the literary drama of this period bears reflections of the cinema. Besides, the aim and object of the successful playwright had so far been to write his drama for the stage and to see that it is appropriate for stage-performance. But now the playwrights, at least some of them, write dramas for the screen. They include several scenes and situations which cannot be successfully represent-ed on the stage, but which are very appropriate for the screen. While writing their plays, they keep the screen and not the stage in view. Candragupta Vidyālankāra has himself admitted this fact in the preface to his 'Aśoka'.

The mythological drama which attracted a large section of the audience in the previous phase, now lost its ground. In the previous period the audience was spell-bound with mythological themes and mythological names. They had an aversion for everything that was poet's own creation, that had not its foundations in mythology. Their tendency was more religious than secular and they revelled in mythological plots. But now the situation changed. With the fast increasing influence of western education and culture, the people lost, or at least diminished, their faith in religion. Instead of revelling in remote mythological themes they began to look around and to take greater interest in the present. Consequently the mythological drama became less popular in this period, and we find that

the number of such plays is much less than that of historical plays or realistic problem plays.

On the other hand Historical drama that was less popular in the previous period greatly flourished during the modern period. Great playwrights like Candragupta Vidyālankāra, Seth Gobind Das, Hari Krsna Premi, Udaya Śankara Bhatta and others contributed to the historical drama. The historical plays of this period can be easily divided into two different sections: firstly we find such historical plays as have been motivated by a tendency of ancient cultural revival. These plays are in continuation of Prasada's historical plays, in which the gifted authors have tried to revive and glorify the ancient culture of India. Vidyālankāra's 'Aśoka' and 'Revā', Bhatta's 'Muktipatha', Govind Das's 'Harsa' and 'Śasigupta' etc. belong to this category. To the second category belong those plays the themes whereof have been selected from medieval Indian History. The problems of Hindu- Muslim unity, the heroism of the Rajputs and other Ksatriyas and a feudal atmosphere of jealousy, mutual hostility, plots and conspiracies are the characteristic features of these historical dramas. Bhatta's 'Dāhara', Premi's 'Raksā Bandhana' 'Śivā Sādhanā', Satyendra's Mukti-Yajna' etc. belong to this category. This historical drama became so popular that playwrights like Laksmī Nārāyana Misra and even G.D. Seth who are known for their problem plays, could not resist the charm of writing historical dramas

Besides these types, another type of drama rose in Hindi during this period. In the preceding phase we found that a realistic tendency was quietly and gradually pervading Hindi drama, but such realistic plays were very few in number, and were not much liked by the audience. But the conditions were much different in the modern period. Both the playwrights as well as the audience had been deeply influenced by Western education, literature and culture. People had been reading Western literature for several decades, and now some of the learned men of India began to visit the West for higher education in Art, Science and Law. These scholars brought back with them strong impressions of the Western ways of life as they had seen these with their own eyes. They had, to some extent, adapted themselves to Western ways of life and thought, and they sought to bring about a similar atmosphere in their own country. They had studied contemporary dramatists of the West like Ibsen, Shaw and O'Neill, and wished to introduce

Western element in Indian literature. These playwrights were responsible for a strong realistic tendency which produced contemporary problem plays of various types. Pt. Lakṣmi Narayana Misra and Seth Govind Das are the most outstanding playwrights of the realistic tendency.

These problem plays can again be divided into two classes: firstly, those plays that deal with the problems of the individual, especially the problem of sex e.g. 'Muktī Kā Rahasya', 'Rākṣasa Kā Mandir' 'Aparādhī' etc. and secondly those plays that deal with social, political and socio-political problems e.g. 'Santosh Kahān', 'Tyāga Yā Grahana' etc. While Lakṣmi Narayana Misra has devoted himself to the problem of marriage and sex in his plays, Seth Govind Das mainly dwells on Gandhian principles of service and sacrifice and their contrast with socialism and communism. These problems plays are the most popular type of drama in the present age, although the illeterate masses may find some of the problems discussed in these plays beyond their grasp.

The allegorical drama which we witnessed in Prasada's Kāmanā in the last phase continued in this period as well. It is meant only for a learned audience that can fully understand and appreciate this type, in which abstract qualities are personified into different characters. 'Jyotsnā' of Sumitra Nandana Panta 'Navarasa' of Seth Govind Das are some of the successful attempts at allegorical drama in this period.

In addition to the above types, two more types of drama rose in this period. For both these types Hindi drama is indebted to the drama of the West, as these types have been borrowed directly from the West. The first is the 'Lyrical Drama', a type of drama which is written all in verse, mostly blank verse. It possesses all the essential elements of drama, e.g. the entrances and the exits, plot- construction, characterisation, dialogue etc. The theme often centres round a woman, and the atmosphere is marked with sentiment and emotion. Although in the ninteenth century we find some plays where verse is abundant, but they are essentially different from these lyrical dramas, as the former are not exclusively in verse and are not so full of sentiment as the latter types. Govind Das's 'Sneha Ya Svarga' Uday Śankara's 'Matsyagandhā' 'Viśvā Mitra' and 'Rādhā' are some of the important lyrical dramas.

The second type of drama which has been borrowed from the West is the One Act play. It is true that some of the types of Sankrit Rupaka (e.g. Bhāṇa; Vyāyoga, Prahasana etc.) were One-Act-Plays. Again, some of the plays of Bharatendu also had only one act each. But the Hindi One-Act-Play which rose and flourished in this period has not descended from these types. Its structure and technique have been borrowed from One-Act-Plays of the West. While in Hindi literature, one-act-play is hardly fifteen years old, this type is not much older even in the literature of the West. Dr. Rāma-Kumāra Varmā, Bhagavatī Carana Varmā, Upendra Nath Aśka, Udaya Śankara Bhatta and a few more playwright, have written beautiful one act plays in addition to other types of drama.

Having referred to all these types, one thing remains to be said that this is only the broad classification of Hindi drama. There are a few more dramas which do not come under any of these heads, and claim an independent class. 'Kartavya' and 'Vikāsa' of Seth Govind Das, 'Bhāgya-Cakra' of Sudar-śana are plays that refuse to accept the above classification, and have, therefore been discussed in a separate chapter.

In the following pages we shall take up these types one by one. In discussing each class we have taken into account only leading or representative plays of each class, and have briefly referred to the chief characteristics of each class of drama.

Chapter XVII. **HISTORICAL DRAMA (A)**

After Prasada, the tendency of cultural reival is found in 'Aśoka'[1] and 'Rewā'[2] of Candragupta Vidyālankāra, in 'Harṣa'[3] and 'Śaśigupta'[4] of Seth Govind Das, in 'Muktipatha'[5] of Udaya Śankara Bhatta, 'Garuḍadhwaja'[6] of Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Miśra, 'Puṇya Parva'[7] of Siyārāma Śaraṇagupta[8] and some other minor historical plays. Although these plays have been written by different writers, yet a common spirit pervades all these works, and they bear strong affinity to each other. First of all, a conflict between two antagonistic idealogies or actions is present in all these plays. In Candragupta 's 'Asoka' a struggle goes on between the spirit of service and sacrifice on the one hand, and the spirit of aggression and ambition on the other. Sumana and Śīlā are embodiments of the former spirit, while Asoka and Candargiri symbolise the latter.

'Aśoka' (1937) is the maiden attempt of Vidyālankāra. The author has written this play for the screen as he himself says—

"अशोक" के सम्बन्ध में, यदि ज़रूरत हुई, तो कैफ़ियत फिर कभी दूंगा। यहां मैं सिर्फ़ एक ही निवेदन करना ~~निवेदन करना~~ चाहता हूं। पहले नाटक प्राय: रंगमंच पर खेलने के लिये लिखे जाया करते थे। परन्तु अब, रंगमच का स्थान चलचित्रों ने ले लिया है। इस नाटक में मैंने अनेक दृश्य ऐसे ~~रखे हैं~~ रक्खे हैं, जिन्हें रंगमच पर तो आसानी से नहीं खेला जा सकता, परन्तु उनका चित्र बनाने में कोई कठिनाई न होगी।

The play deals with the early life of Aśoka, his usurpation of the kingdom of Magadha, the murder of his elder brother Sumana, and Asoka's conversion of heart after the great sacrfice of Śīlā. 'Aśoka', though the first dramatic enterprise of Candragupta, is very interesting and excellent piece of art. It is true that the play is not altogether free from defect, still the playwright has achieved great success in plot-construction, characterisation and in creating tragic atmosphere and tense situations.

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1. अशोक. 2. रेवा. 3. हर्ष. 4. शशिगुप्त. 5. मुक्तिपथ. 6. गरुडध्वज. 7. पुण्य पर्व. 8. सियाराम शरण गुप्त.

The author has carefully delineated the characters of Sumana, Śīlā, Aśoka, Caṇḍagiri, Upagupta, and to some extent of Tiṣya and Citrā. The characters of Sumana and Asoka present a sharp contrast: the former is very affectionate, simple, straight forward and sacrificing, while the latter is stern ambitious, clever and callous. Śīlā is a befitting counterpart of Sumana; her spirit of sacrifice reaches its climax when she decides to sacrifice her own life to save Aśoka, the murderer of her husband. Caṇḍagiri, though a heartless brute and a wreckless tyrant, is still not entirely devoid of virtues. He is strictly loyal to Aśoka, his master, and all his ignoble deeds are the result only of his deep devotion to his master. He lays down even his life while fighting in the battlefield for his master, who once saved his life from the rebels in Taxila. Upagupta is imbued with the true spirit of Buddha, and it is the result of his pacific preachings that Śīlā gives up her firm resolve of vengeance and takes to the path of love and service.

The author has shown adequate skill in dialogue; his dialogues, which are seldom lengthy, are brisk, and are full of life and interest. He has made use of sililoquy on a few occasions, especially in the speeches of Sumana, but these soliloquies are no way undramatic; rather they throw a flood of light on the character of the speaker, which would have remained obscure otherwise.

The playwright has used one language throughout the play, and it is simple Hindi, rarely stuffed with hard Sanskrit words. The use of Urdu and Persian words by the author, however rare, cannot be justified: e.g.

राज कुमार — कुछ बोलोगे भी, या बेवकूफों की तरह ताकते ही रहोगे। क्या है, ~~मारे~~ शेर?
मन्त्री — (सिर हिला कर) नहीं।
राज कुमार — तो और कौनसी खतरे की बात है? etc (Act I scene 6)

Or in III-7

तुम्हें कर याद जगदीश्वर! कुम्रा जग हर्ष दीवाना। etc. (Act III scene 7)

It is inappropriate and anachronistic to put such Urdu-Persian words in the mouths of the characters of the Mauryan period.

The playwright has taken pains to make his scenes impressive, his situations forceful and his gestures significant. He has shown great dexterity in creating the tragic atmosphere; paths flows from simple, touch-

ing words and verily moves the heart of the listeners. The playwright throws several scattered hints on the imminent death of Sumana. For instance when Sumana and Śītā meet (II, 2) before their marriage, a terrific storm begins to blow, which makes them invisible to each other. Similarly in III, 4 when Aśoka reluctantly puts his signature on a paper presented by Caṇḍagiri, the inauspicious cry of a kite is heard. And a terrific storm again rages outside, when the hour of Sumana's wedding approaches. All these are strong hints scattered at appropriate places by the author, which point towards the murder of Sumana. The tragic effect of the scene of murder is enhanced by fixing it first as the hour of marriage of Śītā and Sumana. In these and several other scenes, Candragupta has shown his masterly skill.

In addition to deep pathos, the author has introduced light humour on certain occasions. There is a touch of humour (in the opening scene) in the dialogue of the three princes; the conversation between Śītā and her father in I, 3, and I, 7, is also lively with humour. The play is excellent for the screen but unfortunately it has not been brought on the screen so far.

'Revā' (1938) of Candragupta is a maturer work. Its plot is not strictly historical, although it is based on historical characters and events to some extent. In the introduction, the author himself says:-

'रेवा' ऐतिहासिक नाटक नहीं। फिर भी इसका आधार ऐतिहासिक अवश्य है। etc.

Like his 'Aśoka' 'Rewā' is also meant for the screen and not for the stage – "यह नाटक रंग मंच के लिये नहीं लिखा गया। हां, चित्र पट पर यह नाटक बखूबी उतारा जा सकता है। (Introduction)

Like his previous play 'Rewā' has five acts, which have likewise, been divided into scenes. While stage-directions are very brief in 'Aśoka', here they have become very lengthy, under the influence of Western drama. The author has tried to present vivid pictures of places, things and persons by means of these lengthy stage-directions. The very opening scene of the play is very vivid and picuresque—

(समुद्र में तूफान आया हुआ है। हवा तेज़ी से चल रही है। शिवमन्दिर जिस सामुद्रिक पहाड़ी पर स्थित है, समुद्र की बड़ी-बड़ी लहरें उस पहाड़ी की नग्न चटानों पर ज़ोर ज़ोर से टकरा रही हैं और उनसे भयंकर कोलाहल उत्पन्न हो रहा है।...)

Some of the scenes, especially the opening and the closing scenes are

highly dramatic and significant. The author has made use of the super-human also in order to intensify the effect of atmosphere. In 'Aśoka' the Kāpālika[1] makes a prophecy while the priest does so in 'Rewā'. While 'Aśoka' is a comedy with a deep note of pathos, 'Rewā' is a tragedy altogether.

Although Candragupta has proved true to his claim of becoming a successful playwright, yet he has not been able at least in 'Aśoka', to present the real atmosphere of those times before our eyes. His occasional use of Urdu words is also inappropriate and anachronistic. Again, some of his scenes can be easily eliminated without causing any harm to the main plot. Most of the scenes of Act IV of 'Aśoka' can be easily dispensed with. The death of Kṛṣṇa-Varmā in 'Rewā' does not properly fit in with the plot.

The technique of Candragupta's plays is artful. By keeping the screen in view, he has given a free hand to his imagination, which has produced very beautiful and artistic scenes and situations. The author has displayed great power of producing stage-effects and has also introduced scenes within scenes (Asoka III,6; III,3).

Seth Govind Das is well-known for his active part in the Congress movement. He has been to jail several times and most of his plays were written in the seclusion of jail. He is perhaps the greatest Hindi playwright of today, and has written different kind of dramas, e.g. historical dramas, lyrical dramas and problems plays etc. He has written two historical plays, namely Harṣa (1942) and Śaśigupta (1942) the latter being perhaps the best historical play after Prasada. Both these plays deal with the glorious periods of Hindu history. The plot of his Harṣa begins from the date where the plot of Prasada's Rājyaśrī (1st edition) ends. The plot is well-constructed and the playwright has tried to infuse a spirit of reality into his descriptions of those times, and like Prasada's plays here too we find as if moving amongst those very people. But the play is free from the hardness of language and rigidity of atmosphere which make Prasada's plays unfit for the stage. The characters of Mādhavagupta and Ādityasena have been portrayed with care and skill. They are possessed of individual qualities, while the characters of Hieun Tsang, Jaya Mālā and Alakā are no more than symols of different virtues. They have no special purpose to

1. कापालिक

serve in the play, and their presence simply adds to the softness and sublimity of atmosphere. The presence of low-class characters (like the keepress of the garden etc.) gives a colour of variety to this play which abounds in high-born characters.

Seth's Śaśigupta[1] (1942) is an extremely beautiful and artistic historical drama. In a very lengthy introduction by Dr. Hariścandra Seth (which has been attached to the play) the learned scholar tries to prove that the celebrated Candragupta Maurya was no other than Śaśigupta, the ambitious and enterprising young leader of 'Aśwaka' tribe. He further holds that –

(1) चन्द्रगुप्त मौर्य नन्द वंशीय नहीं था और न मगध ही उसका जन्म-स्थान था। नन्द-मुरा की कहानी तो अठारहवीं शताब्दी में गढ़ी गई है। वास्तव में वह पश्चिमोत्तर भारत का निवासी था। उसका जन्म-स्थान सिन्धु और कुमार नदियों के मध्य को हमोर नाम का प्रदेश था, जिसके ही कारण सम्भवतः उसके वंश का नाम मौर्य पड़ा। चन्द्रगुप्त और शिशुगुप्त एक ही व्यक्ति थे। शशिगुप्त उसका जन्म नाम था और संभवतः भारत के सम्राट का पद ग्रहन करने पर उसने चन्द्रगुप्त नाम धारण किया।

(2) चाणक्य अथवा विष्णुगुप्त कौटिल्य भी पश्चिमोत्तर भारत में विख्यात तक्षशिला देश का निवासी था। शुरू से ही चन्द्रगुप्त और चाणक्य में घनिष्ट सम्बन्ध था, etc.

(3) ग्रीक इतिहासकारों का पोरस और मुद्राराक्षस नाटक का पर्वतक एक ही व्यक्ति थे। and so on

On these and other findings of Dr. Seth, Seth Govind Das has based the plot of this drama. The play opens in lovely, romantic surroundings, and the author presents a vivid picture of scene in a long stage-direction. In this play the author has excelled perhaps more in word-pictures than dialogues. He describes different persons and places in such a clear and picturesque manner that the real person or the place described by him appears as if actually present before our eyes. He has shown very great skill in characterisation, and has taken great pains to delineate the characters of Candragupta, Cāṇakya, Alexandar, Porus and Helen, while he has thrown some light on the outstanding traits of the characters of Āmbhika, Nanda, Rākṣasa and Seleukos. This success in proper characterisation has been achieved by his sagacious choice of only a few important characters for his play. The plot of Prasada's Candragupta is much more complicated than of this play. Here, in spite of the rush of events, the reader does not lose

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1. शशिगुप्त.

the link and is not lost in the maze of events and characters.

Seth's Śaśigupta is much different from Candragupta of other playwrights and historians. He is not all emotion and fire. Rather he is very considerate, deeply reflective, and all his actions are motivated by a strong spirit of patriotism. Cāṇakya is possessed of a very keen power of observation: he is sure that Śaśigupta is the only suitable and competent man to hold together a centralized government of the country. In a word he sums up the character of Śaśigupta as follows -

चाणक्य – वत्स, इस समय आर्यावर्त में तुमसे अधिक वीर, तुम से अधिक आदर्शवादी, तुमसे अधिक देश भक्त, शुद्ध अन्तःकरण और आचरण वाला और कोई व्यक्ति नहीं। etc.

As the same time Cāṇakya is fully aware of his own talents and power of king-making. He trains Candragupta into an ideal man and king simply for the welfare of his mother-land. And when Candragupta is once reluctant to carry out his commands, he angrily tells him that he (Cāṇakya) has got the power of creating numberless Candraguptas:-

शशिगुप्त – (भर्राये हुए स्वर में) परन्तु आर्य . . . परन्तु आर्य, जिस साम्राज्य में राज्य को ही सारा महत्व है, जिसमें साध्य ही सब कुछ है साधन कुछ नहीं, ऐसे साम्राज्य का संचालक हो मैं नित्य प्रति इसी प्रकार के कार्य, इसी प्रकार के साधनों का उपयोग नहीं कर सकता। आज पर्यन्त आपकी कोई आज्ञा न टालने पर भी आपकी इस आज्ञा का मुझसे पालन न हो सकेगा।

चाणक्य – (विकट हंसी हंस कर) ऐसा! तो अर्जुन के सदृश तुम्हें भी मोह हो रहा है। (कुछ रुककर) अच्छी बात है, सोचलो, भलीभांति विचार लो। (खड़े होते हुए क्रोध से) चाणक्य अगणित शशिगुप्तों के निर्माण की क्षमता रखता है। (Act IV Scene 5)

The last sentence of Cāṇakya discloses his height of self-confidence bordering on self-conceit. But all his deeds and conspiracies, noble or otherwise, are meant for the good of his motherland and not of his own self. After finishing his task, i.e. placing Candragupta on the firm and foeless throne of India, he retires into forest, without having any attachment of power, glory and luxury. This act highly magnifies his qualities of self-abnegation and sacrifice, which we find strongly reflected in the person of Mahatma Gandhi.

The last presence of Helen introduces occasional reliefs of love, sympathy and compassion in this drama of intrigue, war and blood-shed. She is

the link and is not lost in the maze of events and characters.

Bhatt's Candragupta is much different from Candraguptas of other playwrights and historians. He is not all emotion and fire. Rather he is very considerate, deeply reflective, and all his actions are motivated by a strong spirit of patriotism. Cāṇakya is possessor of a very keen power of observation he is sure that Candragupta is the only suitable and competent man to hold together a centralised government of the country. In a word he sums up the character of Candragupta as follows -

[illegible]

At the same time Cāṇakya is fully aware of his own talents and power of king-making. He brings Candragupta into an ideal man and king simply for the welfare of his mother-land. And when Candragupta is ever reluctant to carry out his commands, he angrily tells him that he (Cāṇakya) has got the power of creating numberless Candraguptas:-

[illegible]

(Act IV Scene 5)

The last sentence of Cāṇakya discloses his nature of self-confidence bordering on self-conceit. But all his deeds and machinations, dealings or otherwise, are meant for the good of his motherland and not of his own self. After finishing his task, i.e. placing Candragupta on the throne and restoring the throne of India, he retires into forest, without having any attachment of power, glory and luxury. This act highly magnifies his qualities of great abnegation and sacrifice, which we find scarcely reflected in the person of Mahatma Gandhi.

The lack presence of [illegible] important [illegible] culture of love, [illegible]

innocent like a child, lovely like a rose, patriotic like a soldier and compassionate like a mother. A true judge of virtues and merits that she is, she has deep-rotted hatred for Āmbhīka, who is a traitor to his country; she falls in love with Candragupta simply because he is brave and patriotic; When he surrenders himself to Alexander, she begins to hate him, but when again he raises the banner of revolt (i.e. stands up again for the freedom of his country) her feelings of love for Candragupta return to her bosom. But he is smitten in twain — she loves Candragupta more than herself, but she loves her country more than Candragupta even. In the end Cāṇakya, who knows the secret weakness of both Helen and Candragupta for each other, brings about a lasting compromise between India and Greece by joining the hands of Candragupta and Helen in marriage.

Alexandar is a clever diplomat, familiar with all the devices of winning over his foes to his side. Porus, on the other hand, is given to wine and woman and is at the same time, prompted by selfish ends. Although Candragupta looks upon him as a suitable man for India's throne, shrewd Cāṇakya is watchful of his (Porus's) ignoble, unpatriotic and selfish deeds. He removes this strong thorn from Candragupta's path, much to the displeasure of the latter, knowing fully well that the right salvation of the country can be possible from Candragupta and not from Porus.

With the choice of appropriate words and epithets, with the use of pure Hindi without a single word of Persian and Urdu, and with befitting paraphernalia, Seth has succeeded in creating a realistic atmosphere in this play. We find ourselves moving amidst Mauryan people and as if talking to them. This illusion is very spontaneous and in creating the atmosphere of Mauryan times, Seth has succeeded at least as much as Prasada. In this play, his daughter Ratna Kumārī has added some beautiful songs from her pen. The author has conducted a lot of action through long stage-directions, and has made these stage-directions more important and useful for plot development and characterisation even than dialogue. Even the scene of falling in love of Helen and Candragupta is conducted through stage direction without a single word by way of conversation. If this tendency develops further, it is feared that dialogue will be thrown in the background, and stage-directions will serve as a potent means of plot-development and characterisation. For this kind of play, then, a very exper

and skilful team of characters is required to put adequate life and force in their movements and gestures. The play has five acts, divided into scenes, which are often very short and the play seems to have been written for the screen.

'Muktipatha' (1944) of Udaya Śankara Bhatta' is another historical play of considerable merit. It has three acts: the first act is comparatively longer than the second act, which is a little longer than the third. The play discloses some influence of the cinema in its number and length of acts, in the scene of Siddhārtha's departure from his palace and some other scenes of natural description.

In the introduction, the author sums up the central note of his play in the following words -

"अन्धानुकरण मत करो। सोचो और प्रयोग करो। इसी में जीवन की सार्थकता है।"

The play deals with the popular story of prince Siddhārtha, his reflective nature, his disgust of the world, his renunciation, enlightenment and preaching of the path of salvation (मुक्तिपथ). The author has thoroughly portrayed the character of Siddhārtha, who is innocent, compassionate, truth-loving, simple-hearted and highly philosophical. All that he looks at, that he listens to, he takes to his heart and is set a-thinking. But he is not devoid of youthful feelings and worldly emotions at the same time, as we find from his actions and behaviou in I, 4 and I,5.

The author has depicted Śuddhodhana as a loving father, who would set aside his law and justice for the affection of his son. The author has intentionally introduced Sukeśī, who gives the author several opportunities of introducing sweet songs: she also helps in the characterisation of Siddhārtha and Gopā. The author has produced several lovely, natural scenes, which are highly romantic and enchanting, and can be successfully presented only on the screen. Really marvellous is the scene of Siddhārtha's Samādhī (III,2) where in the jungle all kinds of beasts flock round him. Under the ennobling effect of Siddhārtha's personality they forget their mutual hostilities and behave like close friends. The dialogues are often very forceful, lively and significant. While other historical playwrights have made a free use of soliloquies, Bhatta has eliminated them as far as

and skilful team of characters is required to put adequate life and force in their movements and gestures. The play has five acts, divided into scenes, which are often very short and the play seems to have been written for the screen.

'Muktipatha' (1944) of Udaya 'Shankara Bhatta' is another historical play of considerable merit. It has three acts; the first act is comparativ-ly longer than the second act, which is a little longer than the third. The play discloses some influence of the cinema in the number and length of acts. In the scene of Siddhartha's departure from his palace and some other scenes of natural description.

In the introduction, the author sums up the cultural core of his play in the following words -

("अन्त:पुर [illegible] है।")

The play deals with the popular story of prince Siddhartha, his reflective nature, his disgust of the world, his renunciation, enlightenment and preaching of the path of salvation ([illegible]). The author has thoroughly portrayed the character of Siddhartha, who is innocent, compas-sionate, truth-loving, simple-hearted and highly philosophical. All that he looks at, that he listens to, he takes to his heart and is at a thinking- but he is not devoid of youthful feelings and worldly emotions at the same time, as we find from his actions and behaviour in I, 4 and I,5.

The author has depicted Shuddhodana as a loving father, who could set aside his law and justice for the affection of his son. The author has intentionally introduced [illegible], who gives the author several opportunities of introducing sweet songs. She also helps in the characterisation of Siddhartha and Gopa. The author has produced several lovely, natural scenes, which are highly romantic and enchanting, and can be successfully presented only on the screen. Really marvellous is the scene of Siddhartha's samadhi (III,2) where in the jungle all kinds of beasts flock round him. Under the enchanting effect of Siddhartha's personality they forget their mutual hostilities and behave like close friends. The dialogues are often very powerful, lively and significant. While other historical playwrights have made a free use of soliloquies, Bhatta has [illegible] them as far as

possible, and it is only on one or two occasions that the characters indulge in soliloquising. The author has succeeded in producing the atmosphere of these very times; the court scene (II, 2) throws great light on the simple, truthful nature of the subjects of those days; instead of one side being the accuser and other the accused, in these cases both the sides plead themselves guilty and want punishment for themselves. Siddhārtha is greatly moved by the inhuman justice of the judge, who inflicts severe punishment on these simple minded and virtuous people and these words automatically escape his lips —

सिद्धार्थ — न्याय बड़ा कठोर है। इसके आंखें नहीं हैं; हृदय नहीं है। वह यंत्र है। (Act II sc. 2)

As the Muslim courts were dominated by the influence of bigoted Qazis, similarly in days of Hindu ascendncy the Hindu courts were working entirely under the dominance of the bigoted Brahmans.

Pt. Laksmi Narayana Misra, the well-known writer of problem plays, has written one historical drama also. His 'Garuḍa-Dhwaja'[1] (1948) is his latest enterprise in the field of drama. In the introduction to this play it is boasted that the author is the best playwright of the modern period. It is with great regret that we have to challenge the validity of this claim. The author has no doubt succeeded in writing excellent problem plays, but in 'Garuda Dhwaja' he has proved a worst failure. The play is very boring and the plot is not only unfamiliar but also very loosely knit together. With the exception of one or two characters (like Kalidasa), all other 'dramatis personae' are unknown to the world, and the author has not throw much light on them even in the preface. Dialogues are dull and monotonous, forceless and destitute of all warmth and life. The entire atmosphere is boring and has no variety of events or situations.

The play deals with the events of the first century B.C., the traditional date of Kalidasa. In the whole of this drama, only the last scene of court-trial is interesting. The accused plead themselves guilty and argue for the release of the other, thus disclosing the high ideal of morality of the people of these days.

The 'Punya-Parva'[2] (1933) of Siyā-rāma-Sarana-gupta[3] is another historical drama of some artistic merit. The Bodhisattva and Brahmadatta respectively represent the noble and ignoble qualities and their characters

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1. गरुड़-ध्वज. 2. पुण्य-पर्व. 3. सियारामशरण गुप्त.

bear a sharp contrast to each other. The writer has achieved good success in producing the atmosphere of ancient Budhistic times, but he has made the language very hard for that purpose. The play is not very much suited to the stage.

Having discussed these plays one by one we may refer to some of their common features. As we have remarked in the beginning of this chapter, a conflict is present in all these plays. The conflict may be between two persons or idealogies. In 'Aśoka' and 'Rewā' this conflict is quite clear; in 'Muktipatha' the perpetual struggle goes between Siddhārtha who represents the spirit of renunciation, and his father and other relatives who try to bind him to the world. similarly other plays have some conflict or the other working at their bottom.

All these plays have been written with a spirit of cultural revival. They are the result of their authors' discontentment with the present, and they wish to retire to the golden past, and to restore the country its lost glory. Consequently, their authors have mostly succeeded in producing before us the very atmosphere of those times with which they deal. Again, as these are historical, their plot is mostly complicated. But in none of these plays is the plot so confused as we find in some of the plays of Prasada. The authors have seldom introduced more than one plots in one single play, although in certain plays some of their scenes can be eliminated without causing any harm to the main plot.

The characterisation of these plays is of an idealistic nature. The leading characters of these plays are not ordinary men and women of the world, possessing common emotions of human life. Their characters, e.g. Sumana, Sītā, Rewā, Harsa, Cānakya, Śasigupta, Siddhārtha etc. are symbols of extraordinary and rare, if not super-human emotions, good or bad. Leading characters of these plays, usually work under strong emotions and are prepared to go to the extreme in anger, mercy and forgiveness. The language of these plays is pure Hindi (although Candragupta has not been very scrupulous about it), and they abound in melodious songs. Almost all these plays have some high moments, or some situations of suspense. They tend to make more use of long stage-directions for giving vivid pictures of places and persons. They abolish the use of the 'aside' although the soliloquies are quite common and have been used to the greatest benefit.

bear a sharp contrast to each other. The writer has achieved good success in producing the atmosphere of ancient Buddhistic times, but he has made the language very hard for that purpose. The play is not very much suited to the stage.

Having discussed these plays one by one we may refer to some of their common features. As we have remarked in the beginning of this chapter, a conflict is present in all these plays. The conflict may be between two persons or ideologies. In 'Ashoka' and 'Sewa' this conflict is quite clear; in 'Muktipatha' the perpetual struggle goes between Siddhartha who represents the spirit of renunciation, and his father and other relatives who try to bind him to the world. Similarly other plays have some conflict or the other working at their bottom.

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Chapter XVIII. **HISTORICAL DRAMA (B)**

In the previous Chapter we have discussed those historical plays which have a strong tendency of cultural revival. They deal with the glorious periods and celebrated personalities of the Hindu period of Indian History. In addition to these plays, another group of historical plays deals with the medieval Indian History. Their authors have been instigated by contemporary political problems, which have been strongly emphasized and clearly reflected in these plays. These playwrights have not attempted to go deep in their historical findings. The ideals they present are not the sublime sentiments of the soul, but the call of duty, self-respect and worldly ambition. While the historical playwrights of the previous chapter sought the remedy of the deplorable condition of their country in their glorious past when Hindu culture and civilization were at their zenith, these playwrights have striven to reform the contemporary social and political evils by referring to some picked events of Muslim, Rajput and Marhatta history.

Some of the leading plays of this category are Hari Kṛṣṇa Premī's 'Rakṣā Bandhan'[1], 'Āhuti'[2], 'Śivā-Sādhanā'[3], 'Svapna-Bhaṅga'[4] and 'Pratiśodha'[5], Udaya Śankara Bhatta's 'Dāhara'[6], G.B. Pant's 'Rāja Mukuṭa'[7], 'Kulīnatā'[8] of Seth Gobind Das, 'Jaya Parājaya'[9] of Upendra Nath Aska' 'Mukti-Yajña'[10] of Satyendra etc. Prompted by a strong feeling of patriotism, all these playwrights sing the songs of chivalry, patriotism, self-respect, love of independence and numerous other qualities of their medieval heroes; at the same time they describe the disastrous results of their mutual jealousies, narrow-mindedness and religious bigotry, with a view to purge their fellow countrymen of those very unhealthy feelings. Accordingly Premī's 'Rakṣā Bandhan', 'Āhuti', 'Śivā-Sādhanā' and 'Svapna-Bhaṅga' have a message of Hindu-Muslim unity; his 'Pratiśodha' has an appeal of patriotism and sacrifice of one's personal

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1. रक्षा – बन्धन . 2. आहुति . 3. शिवा – साधना . 4. स्वप्न – भंग . 5. प्रतिशोध . 6. दाहर . 7. राज – मुकुट . 9. जय – पराजय . 10. मुक्ति – यज्ञ .

interests for the good of the country. The atmosphere of all these plays is feudal; but the contemporary feelings of revolt against slavery and the creation of an atmosphere of brotherhood have been nicely reflected in these medieval events.

In 'Rakṣābandhan', Karmavatī, the widow of Rānā Sāṅgā sends Rākhī to Humayun in her hour of distress. Humayun accepts to help her like a brother, but reaches late, just after the Jauhar ceremony of all the Rajput ladies. He has to pay dearly for his pious feelings of a brother, because Sher Khan, taking undue advantage of his absence from the capital brings Bengal and Bihar under his control. The following speeches of Humayun are resounding with the feelings of Hindu-Muslim unity –

हुमायुं – दुश्मन! हा:हा:हा:! दुश्मन! आखों से तअस्सुब का चश्मा हटा कर देखो। जिन्हें हम दुश्मन कहते हैं, वे सब हमारे ही भाई हैं। हम एक ही खुदा के बेटे हैं। हां, देखूं तो इस में क्या लिखा है?

(हुमायुं पत्र पढ़ते २ विचार मग्न हो जाते हैं)

हिन्दु बेग – क्या सपना देखने लगे जहां पनाह। महारानी कर्मवती ने क्या जादु का पिटारा भेजा है?

हुमायुं – सच मुच हिन्दु बेग, हिन्दु उन्होंने जादु का पिटारा भेजा है। मेरे सूने आसमान में उन्होंने मुहब्बत का चांद चमकाया है। उन्होंने मुझे राखी भेजी है, मुझे अपना भाई बनाया है।

(Act II, Scene 2)

Or

चांद खां – आप सच कहते हैं, राणा जी! हिन्दु और मुसलमान दोनों ही हिन्दुस्तानी हैं। दोनों को एक होकर रहना पड़ेगा। (Act I, Scene 3)

It seems as if the author is preaching Hindu-Muslim unity in his play.

In addition to this main problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, the Gandhian ideas on untouchability are found in the following speech –

जवाहर बाई – चुप रहो लड़के! मैंने सब सुना है। पश्चात्ताप की आग में मेरा हृदय जल रहा है। जिन्हें तुमने नीच कहा है, वे वसुन्धरा के लिये भगवान के आशीर्वाद हैं – वरदान हैं। भील राज का अपमान करके तुमने मेवाड़ पर देवताओं के अभिशाप को आमन्त्रित किया है।

(Act I, Scene 1)

The theme of 'Ahuti' is glowing with the ideal sacrifices of Rana Hammir and Mir Mahima Shah for each other. The author has delineated both of them in ideal colours. Mir Mahima, the commander of Alauddin's forces, is a brave but pious Muslim. He respects the ladies of the enemies as his

sisters, and disobeys his sensual master who asks him to forcibly bring a Rajput girl to him. In this way the virtuous Mahima invites his downfall, but Rana Hammir gives him shelter and is attacked by annoyed Alauddin. In the battle that follows the Rana sacrifices his all, even his young sons, for the sake of his Muslim guest. And Mir Mahima does not hesitate in killing his loving real brother in battle, who came to fight against Rana's forces. Both these scenes are very touching. Very pathetic again is the scene when the Rajput women, looking at the approaching Muslim banner (which was, by mistake, raised by their victorious Rajput heroes) perform 'Jauhar' after the victory of their soldiers.

In 'Śita-Sadhana' again the author is harping upon the same time. In the introduction he writes -

"शिवाजी के चरित्र को साहित्य कारों ने जिस रूप में अंकित किया है, उससे हिन्दुओं और मुसलमानों के हृदय दूर ही होते हैं। इसके विपरीत मैंने इस नाटक में बताया है कि शिवाजी न केवल महाराष्ट्र में बल्कि संपूर्ण भारत वर्ष में 'जनता का स्वराज्य' स्थापित करना चाहते थे, उनके हृदय में मुसलमानों के प्रति कोई द्वेष न था। मेरी इस धारणा की इतिहास भी पुष्टि करता है।" etc. etc.

The play has a very long list of characters, but only a few of them, e.g. the characters of Śivājī, Aurangzeb, Jījābāī, Roshan Ārā and Jahānā Ārā have been largely delineated. The play embraces a lengthy plot, and briefly refers to almost all the chief events of Śivājī's life. The character of Śivaji shines forth when an extremely beautiful Muslim girl is brought before him, and is presented as the booty; but Śivājī respects her like a mother and sends her back honourably to her kinsfolk. In this drama of intrigue and enterprise, war and bloodshed, the author introduces the delicate sentiments of love and sympathy through the character of Zeb-Unnisa (Aurangzeb's daughter) who falls in love with Śivājī for his heroism and pious virtues.

In 'Svapna-bhanga' the central figure is that of Dārā, who was the symbol of Hindu-Muslim Unity. The author has been wise in this play to select only a few leading characters for his plot, and so he has been able to throw sufficient light on almost all of them. In the introduction, the author says -

"भारतीय इतिहास के मुस्लिम काल में दारा के समान वैभव और शक्ति की चरम सीमा तथा कंगाली और कष्ट की परा काष्ठा तक पहुंचने वाला पात्र दूसरा कोई [illegible]

नहीं है। हिन्दु-मुस्लिम एकता के लिये उस महापुरुष ने अपने जीवन की बलि दे दी। उस समय दारा को जो स्वप्न-भंग हुआ वह आज तक भंग हो पड़ा है।" etc. etc.

In this play, the author dwells mostly on the closing part of Dara's life, his clash with Aurangzeb and his tragic death. The author has also shown that the bloody and bigoted character of Aurangzeb is greatly due to the poisonous teaching and bigoted guidance of his sister Roshan Ara who is more mean, more cunning and hard-hearted than her brother. The scenes of Dara's sufferings and tragic death are very pathetic.

In 'Pratiśodha' Premi visits his native place, Bundel Khand. The play deals with the main events of the lives of Chhatra-sāla and his father Campat Rai, both of whom devoted their lives to the cause of their mother-land. The plot is quite lengthy and complicated and passes through different plots and intrigues, battles and bloodshed. The number of characters is very large, but some half a dozen of them have been properly delineated. The play abounds in the heroic sentiment, but the pathetic scenes of the death of Bhima Sinha, the tragic death of Campat Rai and his queen, and the ideal sacrifice of Vijayā deeply move the reader's heart. The last words of the dying mother of Chhatrasāla gives its title to the play —

लाल कुंवरि — (टूटे हुए स्वर में) बहुत देर से मैं आये, प्राणनाथ प्रभु। सब समाप्त हो गया। केवल एक कहानी रह जायेगी, जिसे बुंदेलों को सुना सुना कर उन्हें देश की स्वाधीनता के लिये पागल बनाते रहना। छत्रसाल सहरा में है उसे कह देना कि तुम्हें सब प्रकार साधन होन, भिखारी बना कर मां और बाप दुनियां से चल बसे। मां बाप की मृत्यु का प्रतिशोध से लेना न भूल जाना। (मृत्यु) (Act I, scene 8)

Act III, Scene 3, in which Aurangzeb repents over all the bloody deeds of his life, his religious bias and his heartless treatment towards his brothers in particular and Hindus in general, is a result of the author's imagination. There is no historical evidence to prove this change of Aurangzeb's mind.

All these plays with the exception of 'Śivā Sādhanā' have three acts each while 'Śivā Sādhanā' has five acts. All the plays have been written for the stage, as the playwright himself writes in his introduction to 'Svapna-bhanga' —

"हां, इतना प्रयत्न तो मैं करता ही हूं कि नाटक रंगमंच के उपयुक्त रहें, जन-साधारण की पंहुच से बाहर न हों और उनमें रसानुभूति का अभाव न हो।"

The playwright has worked greatly under the influence of modern western technique than classical canons. He has set aside the 'aside' altogether but soliloquies have been occasionally used as an instrument of characterisation. As Premi is a protagonist of Hindu-Muslim unity — at least in these plays — the language that he has used is Hindustani, ie. mixed Hindi and Urdu. All his characters, whether Hindus, Muslims or Portugese speak correct Hindustani. Although Premi has introduced appropriate songs in all his plays, they are very frequent in 'Svapna-Bhanga', while they are quite rare in 'Pratiśodha'. Premi is a good poet; a fire of pathos burns in his heart. In the beginning his poetry had a passionate amorous feeling, and it seems that all his pathos and fire of patriotism are the outcome of a reaction. In his introduction to 'Pratiśodha' he writes —

"सच पूछो तो यह नाटक मैंने अपने ही मन को धीरज देने के लिये लिखा है। मैं प्रकृति से कोमल किन्तु बड़े बड़े स्वप्न देखने वाला हूं। ~~यहां जहां फरिश्ते~~ 'जहां फरिश्ते जाने से हिचकते हैं, वहां मूर्ख सरपट दौड़ लगाने लगते हैं,' वाली कहावत मुझ पर चरितार्थ होती है। अपने इसी स्वभाव के कारण आज मैंने अपने आप को भयंकर तूफ़ान में फंसा लिया है। दूर तक कहीं कोई सहारा नज़र नहीं आता। ... निराशा अन्तर के तेज का दीपक न बुझा दे, इसी लिये थोड़ा धैर्य का स्नेह संचित करके मैंने यह नाटक लिखा है।"

The delicate feelings of his heart matured into idealism under the hardships and sufferings of his own life. First of all such a man turns to wine and woman, but disappointed and discontented with these, he seeks shelter in idealism. When Premi was gradually developing into a successful poet and playwright, a strong spirit of service and sacrifice for the country was sweeping the entire country under the influence of the Congress movement. Just as in the Bhakti period, the amorous feelings of the poet appeared before the public under the guise of religion, in the same way Premi's amorous feelings assumed the garb of patriotism and other contemporary feelings. In most of the plays of Premi woman also appears as a messenger of awakening or Hindu-Muslim unity. The characters of Vīṇā, Vijayā, Cāriṇī, and even those of Karmavatī, Jahān Ārā and Zeb-un-nisā bring to world the message of brother-hood, patriotism and self-respect. Again the characters of Prāṇa Nātha Prabhu (Pratiśodha), Prakāśa (Svapna-Bhanga) and Rāma Dāsa (Śivā Sādhanā) have been specially introduced to preach to the world the noble ideals of mankind.

Deeply affected by the contemporary feelings and situations as

Premi is, his plays are consequently lacking in originality, variety and greatness. Repeatedly in his plays, the contemporary problem of Hindu - Muslim Unity in reflected and voiced in so clear terms that the author seems to be verily preaching this doctrine. Consequently the characters who plead this doctrine remain no more but symbols of this feeling. Characters like Dara, Aurangzeb, Jijabai and even Humayun and Chhatrasāla are no more than mere personification of their corresponding feelings. They have no psychological conflict or internal struggle in their character. Even when they give some vent to the contending feelings of their heart, they swiftly surrender before those very outstanding emotions which their character is personification of. Still, the playwright has been able to infuse a spirit of individuality and independent feelings in his imaginary characters like Śyāmā of 'Rakṣā Bandhan' and Vijayā of 'Pratiśodha'.

But this lack of originality, deep emotion and subtle imagination has imparted the beauty and skill of representation to Premi's plays. It is due to the lack of these 'great' qualities that Premi's plays are very appropriate for the stage. They can be easily understood by our representative audience which does not consist only of highly cultured and imaginative people. If these plays are not possessed of dazzling qualities or confounding merits, they are at the same time not beyond the reach of ordinary spectators. Their dialogue has adequate swiftness and force and they do not indulge in various tricks and tactics of dramaturgy.

'Mukti-Yajña' of Professor Satyendra also deals with the life of Chhatrasāla, which Premi's 'Pratiśodha' has also dwelt upon. It is also a good play with the above atmosphere of intrigue and battle, and Chhatrasāla's liberation of his motherland from the bonds of slavery. Some of the events of the play, like the death of Pahāṛa Sinha are contrary to historical evidence. The playwright seems to have depended on the Marathi novel 'Chhatrasala' for his plot.

'Bundela-Kesarī' of Pt. Śyāmā Kānta Pāṭhaka again dwells upon the same theme. In addition to the main story of Chhatrasāla, the author has introduced three poets in this play, viz. Zeb-un-nisa (daughter of Aurangzeb), Bhūṣana and Lāla. The idealism of Zeb-un-nisa imparts a strong touch of nationalism to the plot.

'Jaya Parājaya' of Upendra Nath Ashka again deals with Rajput history, and describes, in an ideal manner, the feelings of patriotism, self-pride, and benevolence. But, unlike Premi, Ashka has not written this play with a view to put before the public these qualities of Rajput character. He, on the other hand, has written it in order to give vent to the feelings of his own mind as he has himself confessed.

"पिछले दो तीन वर्षों में मुझे जिन कठिन परिस्थितियों से गुज़रना पड़ा, जिस अनदेखी विपतियों से जूझना पड़ा और जीवन के इस संघर्ष में मैंने जो आघात सहे, उन्होंने मुझे एक प्रकार से अशक्त ही कर दिया था। .... जी चाहता था बैठ रहूं, बस सारा सारा दिन नीरव चुप चाप बैठ रहूं! किन्तु जीवन-युद्ध में जय-पराजय का चक्कर चलता ही रहता है। विजयी हो कर अपने भाग्य को सराहना और पराजित होकर घुटनों में सिर रख कर बैठ जाना तो दुर्बलता है। निरन्तर चलना, निरन्तर लड़ते रहना ही तो जीवन है।"

Canḍa, the hero of this play, nicely represents this idea of Jaya (victory) and Parājaya (defeat). Very dramatic is the last scene, in which Hari Sinha requests Canda again and again to return home, but Canda firmly marches on his path of victory and defeat. The same feeling of defeat and victory has been reflected in other characters of the play, like Rana-Malla, Hamsa and others.

All the scenes of the first act have been introduced for the creation of atmosphere, and the action of the play begins from the second act. Although action is very scarce in Act I, still the author has not allowed his scenes to be lifeless and dull. His stage-experience has enabled him to make these scenes interesting despite the lack of action. The playwright has not been able to put sufficient force in Canḍa's argument, when the latter decides to look upon Hamsā as his mother. His ideal feelings appear no more than foolish obstinacy of an over-sentimental youth. Sant Gokal Canda has removed this discrepancy of Canḍa's character in his 'Canḍa Pratijñā'; his Canḍa refuses to accept Hamsā as his wife, not because his father has called her his own wife in joke, but because he feels that his father's marriage with Hamsā will save Mewar from destruction.

The character of Canḍa is highly idealistic, and his self-effacement and sacrifice make him a memorable figure. The characters of Hamsā and Bhāramalī are also very lively and well portrayed. The play is nice for

the purpose of presentation, and the playwright has been very careful in using all appropriate devices, that can enhance the beauty and stage-effect of the play.

The same theme has been treated by Sant Gokal Canda in his 'Canḍā-Pratijñā'. The playwright has tried to improve upon Ashka's drama, and has to some extent succeeded in raising the characters of Canḍā, Haṃsā and Lākhā Sinha, and justifying their actions, for which no defence has been offered by Ashka.

'Rāja Mukuṭa' of Govind Vallabh Pant selects for his theme the ideal sacrifice of Pannā, the nurse of Udaya Sinha, who saves her baby-master's life by sacrificing her own child instead. The author has selected this event from Todd's work, although reputed historians have proved this incident to be false. They have shown that Todd's hypothesis is wrong and so also his conclusions. Right or wrong, the story brings before the world the ideal of sacrifice that a servant can make for his or her master. There is plenty of action in this play, but it has not been well-knit together and has not been made very effective. The characters of Raṇajīta and Śītalasenī are very lively, but they too have become more or less types, and the death of the latter has become very unnatural. Some scenes have become very lengthy and therefore undramatic. The scenes of the cemetry and Kālī's temple and very strong and even dradful.

In his introduction to 'Dāhara' (1933) Udaya Śankara Bhatta refers to the theme of his play in the following words —

“....हमारी जातीयता में धर्मवाद की निकम्मी, थोथी रूढ़ियों ने विवेक से गिरा दिया, मनुष्यत्व से खींच कर दासता, आत्म-विद्रोह, विवेक-शून्यता के गढ़े में ले जाकर मार डाला, पीस दिया।

आज जिस नाटक को लेकर मैं हिन्दी संसार के सम्मुख उपस्थित हो रहा हूं उसमें इसी प्रकार का इतिवृत्त है। यही गाथा है। इसमें यदि एक ओर वीरता है तो उसी के अंक में छिपा हुआ पशुत्व अपना प्रकाण्ड ताण्डव दिखा रहा है। यदि एक जगह देश-प्रेम का उत्कट प्रदर्शन है तो उसी के दायें, बायें छल, कपट और नीच वासना रूप सांपिनी अपनी विषाक्त जीभ लपलपाते देश प्रेम को चाट डालना चाहती है। अपनी अपनी डफली और अपना २ राग है।” etc. etc.

In this way, in a lengthy introduction the poet refers to the theme of his play, and enumerates all those causes that led to the downfall of Sindh. Dāhara's two young daughters, Sūrya Devī and Parmāla, wreak vengeance on the foe of their father and motherland by getting him put to death by the orders of the Khalifa.[1] The playwright has succeeded in making the language of his play - Urdu and Hindi both - extremely difficult. He has put hard Persian words in the mouths of his Muslim characters, and difficult Hindi words in the mouths of Hindu characters; this has made his play mostly unfit for the stage, and it is hard even to read. Moreover, in the development of the plot and dramatic ups and downs, the playwright has not shown any skill or power. There is plenty of action in the play, but the author has not succeeded in infusing adequate force into it. There are a good number of scenes and situations which could have been made extremely forceful and thrilling, but the author has dealt with them in a most ordinary manner. For example, the event of Mohd Qasim's death could have been represented in a most ideal, forceful and tragic manner, but the playwright has just made a reference to it in a conversation. Even the last scene of the suicide of Sūrya Devī and Parmāla lacks necessary force and life.

The playwright has achieved ample success in characterisation. There is individuality and life at least in the characters of Qasim, Mānu, Dāhara, and his two daughters. From the point of view of technique this play is not very successful. It cannot suit for stage purposes. It has unsuccessfully worked under the influence of western drama; for the creation of a tragic atmosphere the playwright has resorted to the experiments of romantic drama. Shakespeare's clown appears in Dāhara as the Chamberlain. Again Shakespeare's conception of the appearance of ghost in his Hamlet and other plays has been borrowed by the playwright. In Act IV, Scene 4 Qasim falls down senseless being terrified by the grinning of Dāhara's ghost. This trick, though nice for dramatic effect, is not very consistent, because a firm-resolved and bigoted Muslim like Qasim cannot conceive the idea of the ghost of his foe whom he killed in the battlefield. The ~~conception~~ idea of the ghost is contrary to Islamic conceptions.

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1 It was Mohammad bin Qasim who was put to death by the orders of the Khalifa, and not the Khalifa himself as wrongly stated by Dr. Som Nath Gupta in his 'Hindi Nataka Sahitya Ka Itihasa' page 300

The 'Kulīnatā' of Seth Govind Das also belongs to this category so far as its story, style and technique are concerned. The author does not take up the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, or the sentiment of Rajput chivalry for the theme of his play. The movement of untouchability, which received great strength from the personality of Mahatma Gandhi, has influenced the playwright, who has seized an opportunity, in this play, of discussing whether कुलीनता (nobility) is given by birth or won by personal enterprise. The orthodox society has always been attributing कुलीनता to birth, while enterprising and ambitious persons attribute it to personal valour and virtue. Yadurāi, the hero of this play, is looked down upon by so-called high-born people for this very reason. In a spirit of injured pride and sensibility he says —

"ये हमें पशु से भी निकृष्ट समझते हैं। हम में कितने ही उच्च गुण क्यों न हों, हम उनके राज्यों में किसी भी उत्तरदायी पद पर आसीन नहीं हो सकते। हम कितने ही सुन्दर क्यों न हों, हम उनकी कन्याओं से विवाह नहीं कर सकते। हम कितने ही स्वच्छ क्यों न हों, हमारा छुआ हुआ भोजन उनके खाने योग्य नहीं रह जाता। इतना ही नहीं, यदि देश पर विपत्ति आवे तो यद्यपि हम उनकी उपेक्षा इस देश के पुराने निवासी हैं, हमें अपने देश की रक्षा करने का भी अधिकार नहीं है।"

Like the classical English plays, there is one hero and one villain or rival hero in this play. Both love the heroine, and a tug of war goes on between the two. The situation in the beginning is against the hero; heroine's father opposes his marriage with his daughter. But in the end the hero defeats his rival by his personal valour, and succeeds in marrying his beloved. Most of the characters of the play are symbols of corresponding feelings and emotions, and have no independent existence.

The author has well-constructed the plot, and there is regularity and link in the sequence of events. He has put due force in his scenes and situations, and he has portrayed glorious pictures of the grandeur of medieval courts and palaces. Seth has shown great ingenuity and skill as a dramatist here, as he has done in his other historical plays discussed in the previous Chapter.

In addition to the historical plays discussed above, some more playwrights have written historical dramas which are mostly meant for school

classes. Of these, the best plays are 'Rāṇā Rāja Siṁha', Amara Rathaura' and 'Ajita Siṁha' of Ācārya Catursena Śāstrī. In his plays there is a rush of events, and the story is the chief concern of the playwright. The author has not worked so much to make his products very good plays; he has tried to put before the people these periods of Rajput history for their extremeness of character and deed. Consequently the playwright has made his characters ideals and symbols of different virtues and vices. Still some of his scenes have great effect and colour and his dialogue has force and flow.

Before closing this chapter we shall add a few remarks which apply in general to all these plays. First of all we find that their plot is marked with a rush of events and actions. There is much more of action than philosophising or discussion in these plays. Their characters are altogether lacking in or have very little quality of psycho-analysis. They are strictly practical persons, who have no time for pondering over the conflicting emotions of their hearts. Moreover, the chief characters of all these plays are prompted by certain powerful emotions, may be of Hindu-Muslim Unity, family prestige, Rajput valour, forgiveness or revenge. These emotions are so very powerful in them that they (i.e. the characters) sometimes lose their independent character and remain no more than mere personification of those qualities. These plays are mostly dominated by the personality of one main character, and in most cases the plays are verily named after their respective leading character (Dāhara, Caṇḍa-Pratijñā). This dominance of one character is due to two reasons: firstly the plot of these plays belongs to a period where one person held supremacy over a lot; he might be a prince or a preacher, the common masses simply fllowed his lead. And secondly, the period in which their writers wrote these plays was mostly an era of the dominance of one man, viz. of Mahatma Gandhi in politics, of Swami Dayanand in religion and of Dvi-Vedī in literature.

Next we find that the heroes of most of these plays labour under a spirit of false pride and egoism. It might be their family prestige or their personal pride of word and deed that prompts them to tread their hard, thorny path of troubles and sufferings (e.g. Pratāpa, Chhatrasāla, Caṇḍa, Dāhara etc.). They are not instigated by any cosmopolitan idea or broad view-point. Their viewpoint is narrow and limited, and by their

country or mother-land they do not mean the whole of India, but only Mewar or Bundelkhand or Mahārāṣtra etc. Their patriotism means the service of and sacrifice for their respective state or province; they do not look upon fighting against their neighbours as unpatriotic or disgraceful. They will ruin the future of their country and will not hesitate in doing the greatest disservice to it, if it satisfies their personal ego or lust for power.

Further, in most of these plays we find an atmosphere of country-life and behaviour. Their life is free from the false polish, ettiquette and outward show of city life. In them we meet human instincts in their natural unpolished and unsophisticated form. Their characters are not so intellectual as they are practical and men of action. They are led by quick decision and sudden emotions (e.g. Caṇḍa, Chhatrasāla etc.). In their characters we lack the deep sentiments and cosmopolitan feelings that we find in the characters of Harṣa, Rewā, Candragupta or Cāṇakya. The atmosphere of these plays is of mutual jealousies, fraternal strifes, neighbourly hostilities and lust for power and position.

Chapter XIX. MYTHOLOGICAL PLAYS.

In the previous phase of Hindi drama (1912-1930), mythological plays attracted a large section of the audience, who had an aversion for everything that was poet's own creation. The tendency of the audience was more religious than artistic and they revelled in mythological themes. But now the situation changed with the fast increasing influence of Western education and culture, and the people lost their faith in religion to a great extent. Instead of revelling in remote mythological themes, they began to look around and to take greater interest in contemporary problems. Consequently the mythological drama become less popular, and we come across very few mythological plays in this period.

Some of the mythological plays of this period are 'Gaṅgā Kā Beṭā'[1] (1940), of Becana[2] Śarmā 'Ugra', 'Śrī Vatsa'[3] of Dr. Kailash Nath Bhatnagar, 'Sagara Vijaya'[4] (1937) and 'Ambā'[5] (1935) of Udaya-Śankara Bhatta, 'Pātāla-Vijaya'[6] of Premi. 'Gaṅgā Kā Beṭā', has three acts, with 8 + 16 + 3 scenes. The scenes are very short, and the play betrays strong influence of Western drama and the screen. The play deals with the life of Bhīṣma, and refers to the events of his previous life among the eight Vasus, and closes with the scene when he lay on the bed of arrows and Arjuna brought water for him from underneath the earth with his arrow. Alongside of the main theme of Bhīṣma's life, a very humorous side-plot has been introduced. Old Jwālādatta Śarmā, who hates the very sight of Kshatriyas, is suddenly turned into a young man by the incidental sight of King Śantnu, but his wife is still old. Extremely humorous are these scenes where we meet Jwaladatta in the form of a young husband, with his old broken wife who looks more than double his age. And when his old wife, disgusted with her old age goes out to commit suicide, but is perchance made young by the 'darshan' of Pārvatī, she is extremely pleased. In the meantime her young husband approaches Paraśurāma and prays to him for return of his old age. Now Jwālādatta again gets old but his

1. गंगा का बेटा. 2. बेचन शर्मा 'उग्र'. 3. श्री-वत्स. 4. सगर-विजय. 5. अम्बा. 6. पाताल-विजय

wife has turned quite young. The scene is very funny when the old husband is turned out of her cottage by his young wife.

The theme of 'Śrī Vatsa' is very similar to that of 'Satya Hariścandra' of Bharatendu. It is again a story of the sufferings of a truthful king and his family at the hands of the devil, who in the end discards his guise of the devil and blesses the hero with long life and prosperity. Śrī Vatsa, the hero of the play represents the ideal of truth and nobility. In order to uphold it, he has to undergo great suffering at the hands of wrathful Śani, but in the end the king triumphs over all hardships and trials. In the introduction Dr. Ram Kumar Varma has appreciated the enterprise of the play-wright. The playwright has introduced very beautiful and significant songs on several occasions.

'Sagara-Vijaya' of Bhatta has a long series of events and its plot is very complicated. It refers to a long series of events pertaining to the life of Sagara, the famous king of the Solar dynasty. In the preface, the summary of the complicated plot of this play has been given. The play abounds in various intrigues and domestic plots, repeated attempts at the life of Sagara by his step-mother, the death of his mother and step-mother and his ultimate vow of the service of his country. Bhatta's 'Ambā' is a bit different from these mythological plays. In this play which deals with the two births of Ambā, and her ultimate victory over her enemy, Bhīṣma, the problem of woman and her injured pride has been very strongly stressed.

Like his 'Dāhara', Bhatta's 'Ambā' also is a tragedy. The three daughters of the Raja of Kāśī were forcibly carried away by Bhīṣma for his step-brother. Of these three princesses, Ambikā and Ambālikā agree to be the wives of Vicitra-Vīrya, but Ambā refuses to accept another man as her husband, as she had already chosen Śālva as her lord. Consequently she is sent back to Śālva, but the latter now refuses to accept her as his wife. The Stigma of Ambā's having been carried away by Bhīṣma is the cause of his reluctance. Ambā, who refused to accept Vicitra-Vīrya in her height of morality and faithfulness, gets beside herself with rage at this disgraceful treatment of Śālva. The words that she uttered before leaving Śālva's court are full of wrath and despair:

“ किन्तु जाती हुई एक बार, हां बार तुम से कहे देती हूं कि इसी मान और अपमान की आग में, इसी क्षत्रियत्व की अविवेक की अग्निशिखा में इस पापी समाज का अनन्त काल के लिये नाश होगा। वीरता और विवेक की आँखों से

देखने को छुद्रांग्राडम्बर रचने वाली क्षत्रिय जाति को सुदूर भविष्य में दास, निकृष्ट दास बनना होगा।......"

She makes a firm resolve of wreaking vergeance upon Bhīśma, the real cause of her disgrace and destruction. She approaches Parśurāma for help, but the latter suffers a defeat at the hands of Bhīśma, ~~the real cause of her disgrace and destruction. She approaches Parśurāma for help, but the latter suffers a defeat at the hands of Bhīśma,~~ his illustrious disciple. Then she propitiates Śiva and gets the boon of Bhīśma's destruction in her next birth. As soon as she gets this boon, she drowns herself in Gaṅgā in order to assume second birth for wreaking veneagance on Bhīṣma. She is reborn in the form of Śikhaṇḍī, who is ultimately responsible for Bhīśma's death.

The closing scene of the play is very dramatic and impressive. Bhīśma is lying on a bed of arrows; the past events of his life, especially the story of Ambā, her abduction, her offer to marry Bhīśma and his refusal etc. are passing through his mind one after the other. The agitation of Bhīśma's mind is growing with these thoughts, and being asked by Kṛṣṇa and others, Vyāsa explains the cause of this agitation as follows:-

"काशिराज की कन्या अंबा की प्रतिहिंसा का फल भीष्म को भुगतना पड़ रहा है.....एक स्त्री के अनादर का फल यह महाभारत हुआ और दूसरी स्त्री के अनादर का फल है भीष्म की मृत्यु।"

Bhīśma gives up his life, and suddenly Ambā (in the form of Śikhaṇḍī) appears on the stage in an agitated condition and then quickly quits the stage.

Though a mythological drama, 'Ambā' also deals with the problem of woman in a nice way. Ambā in fact represents that class of modern women, who intend to establish their right of independence and to shake off their old servility to men.

These mythological dramas have much in common with the historical dramas having the tendency of cultural revival. These plays also aim at the revival of the past glory and greatness of the country. They describe the victory of virtue and truth over vice and wickedness. These plays do not deal with the contemporary problems of the country. They, on the other hand, put before the reader the eternal problems of humanity.

As we have already said, the plot of these plays is very complicated, especially that of 'Sagara-Vijaya'. In this great rush of events the playwrights have not been able to make their works very artistic and attractive.

And due to this very fact, psycho-analysis of characters is lacking in these plays. Only one or two characters have been thoroughly delineated in each play, and certain characters, scenes and events can be eliminated from the plays, without reducing the force and finish of the main plot. The scenes of most of these plays are very short; and due to the lack of unity in plot, the scenes are devoid of adequate force and life.

Still these playwrights have given abundant evidence of originality by inventing new-characters, events and situations. The supernatural element has been introduced in all these plays, but it is not very abundant and adds to the dramatic effect. Without the super-human and supernatural element, the mythological plot would not have been successfully carried out. The atmosphere of most of these plays is realistic, but not so much as we find in the historical plays of Prasada. For example, the use of Urdu words in 'Gaṅgā Kā Beṭā' spoils the atmosphere of those times. How could the characters of those mythological times use Urdu words in their conversation as we find here —

ऋषि वशिष्ठ — भद्र! सारे संसार में तत्व हैं महज़ पांच... etc. (Act I, Scene I)

Due to the presence of these words we cannot forget that the atmosphere of the play is modern and not mythological. While Bhatta seems to have devoted much time to the study of authoritative books for his plot, other playwrights do not appear to have undertaken a careful, research of the events of their plot, and have described them greatly after their own imagination.

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pter XX

PROBLEM PLAYS

The realistic tendency in Hindi drama is a result of the contact with the West and its culture which led ~~to~~ the writers to a critical attitude towards the old social order. In the beginning of this century, a strong reaction against romanticism appeared in the drama of the West; a few years later this very reaction appeared in Hindi drama too as a direct borrowing from Western drama. While in Western drama this reaction appeared greadually and after many stages, Hindi drama suddenly developed thi s realistic tendency under the influence of Ibsen and Shaw.

finition of Reali sm. Realism is a more or less conscious reaction to romanticism. The realist objects to the limitations on subject-matter imposed by the romantic point of view. He objects to the amount of idealisation inherent in the process of inveating the chosen subject-matter with glamour. The extravagances and extremities of the romantic spirit he dismisses with the charge that they are untrue to life, or at least to his conception of life. Realism apes the impartiality and impersonality of the scientist; it imitates the scientist's freedom from prejudice, his lack of conventional intellectu or moral inhibitions. Its aim, at its clearest, is to represent life as nearly as possible as the scientist sees it. Freed from the trammels of theology and of morality, the realist, with the scientist, sees the univers as a mechanism of unimaginable grandeur and complexity, in the operation of which he is unable to discover purpose, intention or morality. To the realist, as to the scientist, not only the universe but man also is a mecha-ism; his personality, an inevitable product of the forces of heredity and environment; his physique, a psycho-physical organism; and his conduct, not the product of character and free will but of chemical and physical processes over which he has no control. The realist who follows his theory to it logical conclusions, does not concern himself with morality.

Realistic Playwrights

Today, several playwrights of reputed calibre have devoted themselves to the writing of Problem plays, which are dominated by a strong feeling of realism. Pt Lakami Narayan Misra, Seth Govind Das, Udaya Sankara Bhatta, Prithvi Nath Sharma, Upendra Nath Ashka and several other writers have produced excellent plays on contemporary problems of the individual and of society. Their plays are obviously motivated by a spirit of reaction against romanticism and sentimentalism. With the realistic playwrights of the West, these dramatists look upon romance and sentimentalism as the things of the past. The modern period is, for them, essentially on era of intellectualism and psycho-analysis. Instead of revelling in their glorious past, these playwrights deal strictly with the domestic problems of everyday life or with social and political problems of the day. They give shocks-terrible shocks to the orthodox society by their realistic and natural portraiture of characters.

Chief features of Realistic Plays.

No effort is made to charm an audience by a set of exciting incidents: rather the playwright invites them into a quiet room and asks them to watch the characters, watch the expression of their joys and sorrows, and through those joys and sorrows reach to some understanding of their inner selves. They resort to a style of pscho-analysis in their plays. Their characters give expression to the latent feelings of their heart. Their speeches are specimens of thinking aloud and not of talking without the preoccupation of mind.

As in subject-matter and style, so in technique also these playwrights have borrowed a lot from the West. They have thoroughly violated the traditions of classical dramaturgy. There is a strong tendency in their realistic dramas to simplify the treatment of plot, to substitute the interest of careful characterisation and the accurate representation of speech, manners and setting. Their delineation of characters is much different from that of romantic drama. With them, character tends to be-come more complex than it is in romantic drama, characters are composites of a large number of varying and contradictory impulses generally resulting in indecision. The use of music and dance has been discarded in their plays. The soliloquy and the aside, so useful to romantic playwrights for showing the minds of their chief characters have been set aside in most cases. Lengthy stage-directions are

characteristic feature of their plays, and scenes of daily life have been portrayed with great effort and interest.

In most of these problem plays, we find that although they were written with a strong feeling of revolt against romanticism and sentimentalism, still their authors have not been able to totally free themselves from these very tendecies against which they revolted. Where they have been very careful and conscious in banishing all romantic and sentimental element in their plays, their works have greatly lost their force and beauty. Moreover while the realistic movement is passing from strength to strength, a kind of reaction has also set in against these plays. People are getting fed up with the monotonous extra-realistic presentation of life in these plays, which lack all romance, variety and attraction.

Today our private and public lives are beset with so many complications. The intellectual and critical outlook on life has led to several problems of the individual and of society. Consequently, we find two types of problem-plays, firstly those which deal with the problems of the individual; and secondly those plays which deal with social or political problems. Today, sex is the foremost problem of the individual of the world, and, to some extent, of India too. According to Froude sexual instinct works at the bottom of the entire business of the world. In India (and perhaps in the world also) the problems of sex arise from certain clashes with the institution of marriage. Fundamentally sex is only a question of personal and individual compromise, but it has been rigidly bound by the institution of marriage. In this way a matter of independent and individual concern ha been turned into a social order. Now the free sexual instincts of the individual often come into conflict with the rigid social order of marriag In our country especially, the orthodox Hindu social order of marriage has intensified the sexual problems. The sexual impulse of the educated India got strength from the bold influence of Western civilization and way of life As a result, the social intercourse between man and woman has increased in our country also. But when our West-stricken young men and women, who have started mixing with each other freely, wish for that very freedom in practice too, they meet with vehement opposition from our orthodox people, who form the bulk of our society even today. Consequently these young people ha to suppress their inner impulse against their will. They receive the

stimulus from Western ways of life, but they cannot get the desired satisfaction; living in an orthodox society so they do. The clash between their unchecked youthful instincts and the rigidity of the orthodox social order gives rise to several problems and complications connected with the sex

Lakṣmī Nārāyan Miśra is decidedly the most leading playwright who has dealt with the problems of sex in his plays. Miśra has written many problems plays viz. 'Sanyāsī'[1], 'Rākṣasa Kā Mandira'[2], 'Mukti Kā Rahasya'[3], 'Ādhī Rāta'[4], 'Sindūra Kī Holī'[5], 'Rāja Yoga'[6] etc. and the chief problem of all these plays, in one form or the other, is sex. In raising sexual problems as also in affording their solutions, Miśra betrays a strong influence of the West. His plays are very beautiful, but we have to consider if their problems are really the practical problems of our everyday Indian life, or if they are only intellectual. A careful study of the sex problems of Miśra's plays leads us to the conclusion that they are certainly not the problems of the common man of India. At the most they are the problems of those few educated youngmen and women of India, in whose life intellect works more than in common man's life and who have been deeply influenced by Western thoughts and life. These problems are a little ahead of time for our country, and it seems that Miśra has discussed these problems not after being instigated by their frequent occurrence in every day life, but he received these problems from the realistic literature of the West. The idea of these problems he borrowed from the West, and then he reflected them in the lives of the selected few of his own country in these plays.

Miśra is practically the first Hindi dramatist who studies man in the new social conditions and analyses the fresh problems of the day. It is obvious from the prefaces to his problem-plays that he has been inspired by continental and British dramatists. Obviously, Ibsen and Shaw have considerably influenced his mode of art. A reaction against the romantic idealism of the ninteenth century and a revolt against historical drama which does not solve the problems of the day characterise his dramatic productions. In spite of his professed intellectualism, he essentially continues the idealistic reaction against Western materialism. He has not been able to keep aloof his sentiments in his plays, and the idealism of the East has a great fascination for the author.

'Sanyāsī' (1929) is Miśra's first play in which two parallel con-

1. सन्यासी. 2. राक्षस का मन्दिर 3. मुक्ति का रहस्य. 4. आधी रात. 5. सिन्दूर की होली. 6. राजयोग.

flicts are separately shown. Mālatī, a young student, who falls in love with her young class-mate strikes the major key in the play. To complete the sexual triangle her professor develops a weakness for her, outwits the young student and marries the girl. The disappointed youngman becomes a 'Sanyāsī' and hence the title of the play. Another interesting problem is created by an elderly professor who marries a very young girl. An earnest effort for overcoming the marital maladjustment is displayed by either party but the attempt ends in smoke. The young girl, then, attaches herself to her husband 's friend, an editor, but the fellow dies of consumption in a jail. In the end, the two couples arrive at a compromise, though there is much of helplessness than sweetwill in their compromise.

Malati and Kiranmayi, the female characters in the play are very bold towards men. But such bold girls are rarely to be found in Hindu society which knows and idealises shy and bashful maidens. The other characters are intended to represent certain ideas. The old professor is a sample of the old social order; Viśva-Kānta, the disappointed young man is a satire on romantic love; and the two girls are the typical product of modern age characterising personal liberty in marriage and sex.

In 'Rākṣasa Kā Mandira', Asgari, a concubine is the pivot of interest in the first half of the play. She is the keep of a lawyer who stands for a life of prudery and sham respectability. The wayward woman also entraps the son of the lawyer; later on Muniśvara, who is already married takes a fancy to her. When they make love to each other, his wife appears on the scene to intensify the piquancy of the delicate situation. When he is reminded of the sacred vow of monogamy he ridicules it. The latter half of the play is a series of episodes which are meant to create thrills.

In 'Mukti Kā Rahasya' (1932) again, the author has led a revolt against the 'sacred' institutions of society. The theme of the play is again the 'eternal triangle of sex'. Āśā is torn between the love of two men. She lives in the house of a widower, Umā Śankara, whom she loves. It was she who poisoned the first wife of Umā Śankara with the help of a doctor. On Āśā's confession of love for the doctor, Umā Śankara retires in favour of the latter and decides to live alone. Āśā marries the doctor and Umā Śankara, in a fit of sentimentalism parts with his money which is a hind-

rance to the ideals of socialism. The playwright has not very much succeeded in characterisation and many actions of his characters, especially of Āśā, are inconsistent.

Miśra's other plays, specially his 'Rāja Yoga' and 'Sindūr Kī Holī' also deal with the problems of sex. And in finding out a solution of this baffling-problem, Miśra has gone very deep. In his 'Mukti Kā Rahasya' he has made hold to offer a solution with a compromise between marriage and love. Āśā can make one man her husband and the other her lover at one and the same time. This solution is no doubt shocking to the Hindu society but this is what actually happens in problematic cases.

To the main problem of sex Miśra's has affixed some secondary problems of election, Swadeshi movements etc. While the problem of sex is very deep, delicate and subtle, these contemporary problems are too rough and rugged. They spoil the unity of the play and its effect when they come in between the delicate problem of sex. Again, the shape of tragedy in most of his plays is similar. The ending of 'Sanyāsī' and 'Rākṣasa Kā Mandira' is quite similar. Not much different is the ending of 'Mukti Kā Rahasya', 'Ādhī Rāta', 'Sindūr Kī Holī' also. In the same way there is a marked similarity in some of the characters (e.g. Raghunātha of 'Rākṣasa Kā Mandir' and Viśvakānta of 'Sanyasī'; Asgari, Āśā and Kiranmayī). Most of Miśra's female characters bring about a compromise between love and marriage thus solving their complicated sex problem. Again the reformer of the last quarter appears in most of these plays in one form or the other. The playwright exposes to the world the weakness latent in his character. Murari Lal (Sindūr Kī Holī), Murali Dhar (Sanyāsī), Muniśvara (Rākṣasa Kā Mandir) and Umā Śankara (Mukti Kā Rahasya) are some of the examples.

Miśra has not been very successful in technique. In some of his plays (e.g. Sanyāsī) the scenes change so swiftly, and the entrances and exists, are so many in them that a confusion is caused on the stage. In his 'Ādhī Rāta' the author has introduced supernatural element which does not look nice in a realistic drama. But the playwright has achieved good success in his psycho-analytical style. He has conducted his conversation often in broken sentences. The dialogue is notably simple and terse. It is seldom poetical, rhetorical, or literary. It is talk, broken and

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and fragmentary as in real life. At moments the sentences are so broken that they jar on the ears. Although his prose dialogue has approached closer and closer to the style of real conversation, yet the accurate reproduction of conversation runs the considerable risk of boring the audience. The dramatist tires out his audience for the sake of his being linguistically precise. Misra has, on several occasions, included full sentences of English in his plays which are entirely unintelligible to a reader or spectator who knows Hindi alone.

In his enthusiasm for realism, or more correctly naturalism, the author has avoided frequent use of asides, soliloquies and impassioned harangues which have been a common feature of drama. In a simple language he has also scattered very brilliant and deep reflection on life (Sanyāsi). In these problem plays, Misra is a dramatic satirist who claims to draw a faithful picture of contemporary life. A careful analysis of his plays shows that he does not paint life as it is, nor as it ought to be. He is, therefore, neither a naturalist nor an idealist. Yet he has affinities, with both of them. He observes the world of actuality like the naturalists and dreams of a better world like the idealist. But instead of insisting on either of these phases, he creats with a definite purpose an exaggeration of life. In his attempt to exaggerate life, he creats type figures who are frequently inconsistent and are invariably dominated by the plot. It is almost inevitable for introducing thills into his plays. Inspite of these technical flaws, the credit of looking squarely at the social problems and of expresing bold opinion on them belongs to Misra. No Hindi playwright before him showed so much of courage in leading a tirade against the ideals of duty, marriage, monogamy and romantic love. Evidently G.B. Shaw who put an end to the epoch of short-sighted optimism and exposed the snobbery and hypocrisy of the pseudo-respectable classes has exerted a profound influence on him, as on other problem playwrights.

'Duvidhā'[1] of Prithvi Nath Sharma also deals with the problem of sex. The problem of this play is the 'duvidhā' (indecision) of a highly-educated girl of today. When a modern girl finishes her education, the question that confronts us is that of marriage. She has so far relished the joys of an independent life, while she knows that married life brings so many

1. दुविधा

restrictions and bonds with it. So her mind wavers between two conditions; she has no faith in the decision of her parents, nor does she possess the power of deciding herself. This wavering condition of Sudhā's mind gives the title of 'Duvidhā' to the play. In his 'Aparādhī'[1], the playwright wants to show that a person is not always guilty by his nature. It is often one's circumstances that make a man guilty, although he may be perfectly clean in his conscience. Ashok Kumar, a sentimental youth, lets go a thief with these very feelings, and is prepared to suffer himself in place of the actual thief. The magistrate is sure of Ashok's innocence, but the evidences against him are so strong that he cannot be acquitted. In the end the situation is saved when the actual thief presents hiself in the court and Ashok Kumar is absolved of his guilt. The author has sweetened this dry theme with the introduction of the love-plot of Līlā. In this play there are two chief male characters-Ashok and the thief (Māta Dīn) — both of whom are sentimental. The sentiments of both these youngmen are instigated by woman — of Ashok by Līlā and of the thief by the Āyah. There are three women in the play; Lila, Renu and Āyah. Līlā is a simple-minded girl, attracted by the virtues of Ashok Kumar. Renu is a self-controlled and sacrificing girl, while the Āyah is moved by Ashok Kumar's innocence.

Prithvi Nath is an experienced story-writer; in his technique of story-writing he has been influenced by the western literature. In his plays also he has achieved great success in plot-construction. But he has not shown any skill in characterisation; in 'Aparādhī' none of the characters has been fully developed.

'Kamalā'[2] of Udaya Śankara Bhatta is again a problem play which centres round the question of sex. It is a tragedy, but its ending has become somewhat melodramatic. The chief character in 'Kamalā' is that of Dev Narayan, who is a suspicious and sullen old man. Like other things, he looks upon woman as an object of man's enjoyment alone. Woman, for him, has no independent individuality. For the purpose of enjoyment he marries an educated girl, Kamalā in his old age. Medieval man's pride comes into conflict with modern woman's independent instincts. Here too the woman teaches man the lesson of life by her sacrifice. This drama is very successful in characterisation, language and sentiment. But on the whole it is not so attractive as it is in different aspects.

1. अपराधी. 2 कमला

'Bandhan' and 'Chhāyā' of Hari Krsna Premī are also problem plays. While in 'Bandhan' the problem is that of sex, as in above dramas, the problem of 'Chhāyā' is of a different nature. 'Chhāyā deals with the problem of a writer, who, although a great genius, has to live on the mercy of hard-hearted and exploiting publishers. Prakash, the hero of the play is a very great poet. He gives light of poetry and joy to the world but his own life is plunged in deep darkness. In a pathetic way, he says—

"संसार को प्रकाश के गीत चाहिएं। लोग कहते हैं तुम्हारी कविता, साहित्य की अमूल्य सम्पत्ति है, किन्तु कोई यह नहीं देखता कि विश्व-साहित्य को अमूल्य सम्पत्ति देने वाला कवि अपनी पत्नी की इज़्ज़त ढकने के लिये एक धोती खरीदने में भी समर्थ है नहीं, अपनी बच्ची को दुध पिलाने के दाम भी नहीं पाता। उस दिन जब साहित्य सभा के मन्त्री मुझे मान पत्र दे रहे थे, सभा के बाहर कचहरी का प्यादा समन लिये खड़ा था। इस तरह कब तक अपना लोहू पीकर मैं साहित्य का संसार भर सकूंगा।"

In Prakash's view these publishers are no better than those capitalists who exploit the labourers for their personal benefit. The poet sharply criticises the behavious of the publishers, and in fact Premi himself is speaking in the guise of Prakash. This play has strong reflections of Premi's bitter experiments of his early career as a poet and playwright. But the problem which Premi has touched in this play is not of Prakash or Premi alone; it is the problem of every writer who feels worstly exploited by his publisher. The writer of 'Chhāyā' voices a strong note of protest against the capitalist mentality of the publishers when he says —

"रुपये को अपने सर न चढ़ने दो मनुष्यो। रुपये को मनुष्य का सुख न छीनने दो मनुष्यो। रुपयों को मनुष्यों का अपमान न करने दो मनुष्यो!"

But this is no solution of the problem raised by the playwright.

The hero of the play, namely Prakash is a highly sentimental youth, who judges everything in a sentimental mood, and his sufferings are, to a great extent, due to this weakness of his character. As the play bears personal reflections of Premi's life, the speeches of the hero are very poignant and sharp. The playwright has greatly succeeded in plot-construction and characterisation. But his technique has some defects. Some of the scenes are very brief, and the frequent admits and exits will displease the audience in case the play is performed on the stage. Still Premi deserves the credit of dramatising this burning problem of the writer,

which is totally his original invention.

Now we turn to those plays which deal with social, political or pseudo-political problems. Seth Govind Das is the foremost playwright of this category. In fact Seth Govind Das is the greatest Hindi playwright of the modern. He has written first rate dramas of so many kinds, namely, Historical dramas with a tendency of cultural revival (Harṣa and Śaśigupta) historical plays reflecting contemporary problems (Kulīnatā), allegorical dramas (Navarasa), lyrical dramas (Sneha Yā Svarga), dream-plays (Vikāsa) etc. He has also written very excellent plays on the contemporary political problems. His 'Sevā Patha'[1] 'Tyāga Yā Grahana'[2] 'Santosh Kahān'[3], 'Mahatva Kise'[4] 'Pakistān'[5], 'Garībī aur Amīrī'[6] etc. deal, in a masterly manner, with social or political problems of yesterday and today. In all these plays we notice a profound influence of Gandhiji's philosophy on the author's mind, and most of these plays have been written with a view to uphold Gandhian doctrines.

Almost all these plays bear slight or strong reflections of the personal life and circumstances of the playwright. Seth Govind Das, who has been a member of the Central Assembly for several years and who is, at present, a member of the Constituent Assembly also, belongs to a very rich family. He inherited two things in legacy: firstly his great wealth and a life of luxury ; and secondly, an orthodox viewpoint. But we generally find that an awakened mind soon revolts against the influence of family traditions, and gets fed up with a life of monotony, even in luxury and wealth. He wants to think independently and to frame rules for himself and to tread paths where his ancestors never set foot on. He longs for variety and freshness, and finds solace in these even if they take away much of his comforts and enjoyments.

Seth's life is a story of a similar reaction. His awakened and enlightened mind revolted against the legacy of his family. The reaction against a life of vast wealth manifested itself in simple living; and the reaction against luxury turned into his love of country and his sufferings (going to the Jail etc.) for that cause. His intellectualism and free thinking replaced the orthodox viewpoint of his family. The combination of all these elements produced in him a practical idealism, which has been deeply influenced by the philosophy of Gandhiji. Seth has firmly adopted the

1 सेवापथ 2. त्याग या ग्रहण 3. सन्तोष कहां 4. महत्व किसे 5. पाकिस्तान 6. गरीबी और अमीरी

practical side of Gandhiji's philosophy, and has presented the same in his plays with a firm determination.

In his revolt against his family traditions and in making a new path for himself, Seth met with a very hard opposition from his own relatives. Seth's family was obviously very loyal to the Crown, while Seth had to raise a standard of revolt against that very government. But this conflict with his family was not very deep or metaphysical. So while there is an outer conflict present in all his plays, very deep, subtle and metaphysical conflict is nowhere to be found. And if anywhere it is to be found, it is very weak. Consequently while Seth has greatly succeeded in his power of accurate analysis and explanation, he has not proved to be a great original creator. But the conflict that Seth had with his family and, still more, that he experienced in his public life, is clearly and strongly reflected in his plays.

'Siddhānta-Swātantrya (1938 ; सिद्धान्त स्वातन्त्र्य) of Seth which was written in Jail, ~~only~~ has only two acts, which have not been further sub-divided into scenes. Like most of the plays of Seth, this drama also violates the unity of time. The events of the first act took place in 1905, while the second act pertains to the year 1930. There are three leading characters in the play— Caturbhuj Das, his son Tribhuvana Dasa, and his grandson Manohar Das. There is not much of action in the play, so the question of plot - construction does not arise. In characterisation Seth has delineated Caturbhuja Das — a very rich Zamindar — as a highly affectionate father and grand-father, whose only principle is to see his son and grandson happy and prosperous, as he says in Act I —

चतुर्भुज० — मेरे तो कोई सिद्धान्त ही नहीं। मेरे सिद्धान्त तो तुम हो। तुम सुखी रहो, तुम आराम से रहो, तुम पर कभी कोई किसी तरह की भी आफ़त न आये, यही मेरे सिद्धान्त हैं।

His son Tribhuvanadasa, who is a young man in the first act, is very sentimental and mad after his principles. He firmly believes in this Independence of thought for which he slights his father in the first act and disregards his son in the second. The path that he himself followed in his youth, and to which his old father strongly objected, he gave up in the middle age. But the same path is now adopted by his young son Manohar, who is as fiery and sentimental as his father in his young days was. In

an interesting dialogue Tribhuvana explains to his friends the origin of 'boycott'. The conversation in Act I seems to reflect Seth's own life. It appears that it is Seth who himself speaks in the following words of Tribhuvana Dasa --

त्रिभुवन। -- परन्तु मैं अकर्मण्य सुख का जीवन बिताकर केवल खा-पी और चैन उड़ा कर शूकर के समान मोटा होना नहीं चाहता। मैं संसार में कुछ करके कुछ होना चाहता हूं। मैं अपने देश की सेवा करूंगा और पराधीनता की जंजीरों से अपनी मातृभूमि को स्वतन्त्र बनाऊंगा।

In the same way in Act II also there are strong touches and impressions of Seth's personal feelings.

The problem of 'Sevā-Patha' (1943) is really of the very difficult 'Path of Service'. There are three important male characters in the play. The hero, Dina Natha is a poor youngman, who is a firm follower of Gandhi's doctrine of service and sacrifice. Sakti Pāla belongs to the upper middle class; he stands for socialism and means to serve his country by working honestly without bidding farewell to his wealth and luxuries. Śrī Niwās is a member of the aristocratic class. He represents the capitalist mentality, but is also an epicure, who does not worry his head with any problems of his country or the world. There is little of action in this play also, and the playwright means to bring these three different creeds into conflict, in which Gandhism comes out victorious. In a side-plot the author casts a hint at the fickleness, faithlessness and materialistic point of view of the West, which is diametrically opposed to the ideals of the East.

'Tyāga Yā Grahana' (1943) is another beautiful social drama. In this play Communism contends with Gandhism. The former believes in 'Grahana' (ग्रहण) in the policy of getting more and more, while the latter believes in 'Tyaga' (त्याग, sacrifice), in the policy of giving more and more for the peace of the man and the world. This play has much more of action than the previous two plays, which were merely collections of arguments and counter-arguments. In this play again the Gandhian principle of 'Tyāga' (sacrifice) wins over the contrary principle of 'Grahana' which aims at selfishness. There are four important characters in the play, namely, Dharma Dhwaja, Nitī Rāja, Vimalā and Ramā Kānta Varmā. Most of the characters are types as is clear from the author's introduction of them, e.g.

धर्मध्वज —— एक गांधीवादी युवक
नीतिराज —— एक समाजवादी युवक
रमाकान्त — 'देहात' पत्र का ~~सभापति~~ सम्पादक
शिवदत्त शर्मा — कांग्रेस-कमिटी का सभापति
शान्तिदेव सरस्वती — किसान-सभा का सभापति etc.

Vimala, an educated young girl, who has no independent creed has some leaning towards Communism. She is introduced to Nīti Rāja and Dharma-Dhwaja at one and the same time and for a moment she feels attracted towards both. Then Nīti Rāja wins her to his side and she agrees to lead with him the social as well as sexual life without binding themselves in bonds of marriage. The orthodox Hindu society is wrathful at their illicit and sinful connection; but Dharmadhwaja is the only person who supports their actions. In his view Nīti Rāja and Vimalā are true Communists, who unflinchingly march on their path of communist principles. But while Vimalā agreed to this connection strictly due to her faith in communist principles, Nīti Rāja was prompted more by her youth and beauty than his own principles. While she is prepared to face all scandal and opposition, he is too weak for this hard job.

When Vimalā gets 'en ciente' as a result of their connubial relations she is disillusioned by the changed attitude of Nīti Rāja. He shudders at the idea of conception, while she sees nothing wrong in it. When he requests her for abortion, she gets enraged and curses him for his principle of selfishness (Grahana) and goes to Dharmadhwaja for guidance. Here the character of Dharmadhwaja is idealized; he saves her from an angry mob after sustaining injuries himself, and when Vimalā relates the whole story of her connections with and recent disconnection from Nīti Rāja, he readily steps forward for her help and marries her, totally regardless of the fact that she is already pregnant.

The playwright has thrown ample light on the character of Ramā Kānta, who is an effectionate, kind-hearted man and yet firm on his principles. While the playwright has conformed to classical canons in not dividing the five acts of the play into scenes, he has violated these very canons in twice showing the scene of embracing and kissing first between Vimala and Nītiraja, and then between Vimala and Dharmadhwaja. The playwright has shown to the Indian youth, who are sometimes swayed by communist sentiments

the natural consequences of following communist principles in practice.

In 'Santoṣa Kahan' (1945) Seth deals with another common problem of every man's life, i.e. the problem of contentment. Man is never contented; when he is in one position he longs for the other, and when he gets that too, he begins to long for yet another. This very is the problem of the life of Manasā Rāma, the hero of the play. In the beginning he is a very poor man, a school teacher, very fond of reading and writing. In the second act he appears in a splendid bungalow; he is now a very rich man, has received the title of knighthood, but even this life of luxury and great honour, fails to give contentment to his heart. In the third act We meet him in the guise of a Congressman, clad in Khadi from top to toe and living in an Ashrama; but here too he is not contented. In Act IV he comes before us as a Minister, but he is still discontented. He gives up that mode of life also after some time and tries to find contentment in a life of simplicity, open-air living, in art and music, in opening schools and hospitals in the country side. In other words he finds contentment in a life of constructive work as preached by Gandhiji. In the end, the playwright sums up the central note of the play in the following words —

मनसाराम — सन्तोष का मार्ग खोजते रहना चाहिए और सच्चा सन्तोष कदाचित असन्तोष में ही है। etc.

In this play, which has again five acts (with no scenes) there are only four characters; ~~but~~ of these even, only one character Manasā Rām, the hero, is the only person who carries the play with him. Nīti Vrata and Rāma have been added just to carry on conversation with Manasā Rām, and Manohar plays no part in the drama at all. In fact 'Santoṣa Kahān' is a monodrama, where only Manasā Rām goes on explaining his view-point, while the other characters are there just to say 'Yes' or 'No' to his arguments.

Far better than his previous drama is Seth's 'Pakistan' (1946). It is a political drama in three acts, in which the distinguished playwright has dealt with the notorious problem of Pakistan. Written before the actual establishment of Pakistan, the play is entirely the result of author's imagination, and contains all hypothetical facts. The author fancies that, in spite of the patriotic efforts of the well-wishers of their mother land, India is divided and Pakistan is established. But the purpose with which the Muslim League demanded and got a separate home-land for the

Muslims, remains unfulfilled. Besides the old problems of every day displeasure, many new problems crop up as a result of the partition of the country. The minority problem --- which was the cause of trouble in united India, and for the solution whereof the establishment of Pakistan was sought --- remains still unsolved. Dis-content and displeasure still prevail among the respective minorities of both the dominions, which rose from the partition of the united India.

The patriotic playwright, in fact, wrote this play with a view to dis-couraging the demand for Pakistan. He has tried to bring home to the protagonists of that demand the defects of their theory and the evil consequences of partition. In a way, he has admonished them to give up their unpatriotic demand, as it won't satisfy them or redress their genuine grievances. But the gifted playwright does not know that the poison of communalism distilled in the minds of Muslim masses by Muslim Leage propaganda was too strong and deep. Moreover, the English rulers themselves wanted the partition of the country. Shrewd as they were, they knew that if they left a united India, it might get very strong in a short time. Again in a united India they won't have any say after they had quitted it once. On the other hand, they knew, that if some part of the country was cut off and handed over to the Muslims (under the name of Pakistan) they would have a full hand in the government of that dominion, firstly due to the dearth of efficient hands for government and administration there, and secondly due to the eagerness of the Muslim League to seek their ever-ready advice and support.

The picture of Pakistan as presented by the playwright is imaginary. It does not reflect the real state of affairs in Pakistan, as Pakistan came into existence after the publication of this play. It is greatly different from the series of general massacres and bloody deeds that immediately followed the actual establishment of Pakistan. India can never forget the large scale brutal massacre of her ~~sons~~ children in Pakistan, which commenced from 15th August 1947, the date of the establishment of Pakistan. It is true that in some parts of East Punjab and Delhi a spirit of retaliation tossed the indignant people in Indian Dominion also, but the strong national government of the Indian Dominion soon succeeded in suppressing all lawlessness and trouble. Well, all these things were beyond the noble imagination of Seth who never foresaw these horrible deeds.

The plot is very interesting and well-constructed, and there is ample action in the play. The author has nicely portrayed the characters of Śānti-Priya and Jahan Ara, and have described, in detail, the struggle that goes on in their minds between conflicting emotions. Both of them are above all communalism and look upon the two nations as brothers and friends. For a short while Jahan Ara, under the influence her Muslim League advisers, gives way to communal feelings, and she also stands up for the cause of Pakistan. But her human side remains still alive and strong. She agrees to become a member of the Pakistan cabinet with a view to improving the lot of her community and promoting friendly relations with India. But when she studies the bigoted bent of mind of the Pakistan Premier and finds his principles based on fraud and falsehood, she at once resigns from the cabinet, goes back to Delhi and is once again joined with her old Hindu friend Śānti Priya. Both of them were, and are again, free from communalism and they now start striving for the reunion of both the dominions.

Ample light has been thrown also on the characters of Amar Nath and Mahfuz Khan, both of whom strive hard for bringing about a compromise between the two nations. Pir Bux and Durgā are strong communalists. While Pir Bux is wedded to the cause of Pakistan, Durgā is sworn for a strong Hindu government in united India.

The introduction of Gangā Rām (the parrot of Jahan Ara) and Ruby (the bitch of Śānti Priya) shows the ingenuity of Seth's imagination. These two characters give various opportunities to their respective masters of giving vent to their innermost feelings, and of disclosing the occasional ups and downs in their mind. But for these two characters, the play would have abounded in soliloquies which would have been essential for the faithful portrayal of the conflicting emotions of the minds of Jahān Ārā and Śānti Priya.

Equally beautiful is the next drama of Seth, viz. 'Mahatva Kise' (1947). This play is a debate on the problem as to whether greatness lies in Wealth or Poverty. The debate goes on at great length between Karam Chand, the hero of the play and his wife Satya Bhāmā. Satya-bhāmā, who is a practical woman, strongly believes that without money man has no value. He is nowhere respected, and his very life can run on successfully only with the help of

money. Karam Chand, who is an ideal Gandhi-ite is adamant in his view that sooner or later दरिद्रनारायण (Poverty) shall be respected and it will rule. The wife has a plenty of worldly sense; she is a woman of the world who attaches due importance to everything, and discriminates between friend and foe. Her husband, on the other hand, lives in a world of ideal sentiments. He is ideal in his feelings and forgiveness. He distributes his vast property in benevolent deeds; in the Swadeshi movement, he sets aside every little foreign thing that was in his house. His selfish friends take undue advantage of his noble and liberal habits.

The main theme of the play has been touched thrice exactly in the same words by the husband and the wife. The theme is ---

सत्यभामा — ... देखना है कि आगे आने वाले जमाने में भी सम्पन्नता और दरिद्रता में .... (कुछ सोचते हुए) संपन्नता और दरिद्रता में (चुप हो जाती है)
कर्मचन्द — (सत्यभामा की ओर देख कर हुए) हां, संपन्नता और दरिद्रता में ...?
सत्यभामा — है महत्व किसे? (दोनों एक दूसरे की तरफ देखते हैं।)

This very scene, with these very words, is repeated thrice, so that it begins to tire out the audience and lose its dramatic effect, instead of enhancing it, as Seth might have felt it. The play ends in indecision as was quite natural; Seth does not believe that greatness lies in wealth, nor can be easily prove from the practical world that it lies in poverty; so he wisely ended the play in indecision. Satyabhāmā nicely brings out the difference between the two viewpoints ---

सत्यभामा — आप स्वप्न के स्वर्ग में रहने वाले देवता हो सकते हैं, लेकिन मैं तो मृत्यु लोक में रहने वाली मानवी हूं। और मेरा तो यही मत है कि स्वप्न के लिये जीवन की बाजी लगाना कोई बुद्धिमानी नहीं। आप पार्थिवता से सूक्ष्मता, मस्तिष्क से हृदय, शरीर से आत्मा के अधिक निकट हैं। परन्तु यह न भूलिये कि हम पार्थिव संसार में निवास करते हैं। (The Closing speech)

Seth's best problem play is perhaps his 'Garībī Aur Amīrī' (1947) पृथकता, श्रम या उत्तराधिकारी for which a prize of Rs 1200/- was awarded to him by the Hindustani Academy, Allahabad. Like his 'सिद्धान्त-स्वातन्त्र्य' and 'Vikāsa', this play also was written in Jubbulpore Jail in 1941. In a long introduction the playwright refers to the sources of this plays, and adds some notes on his latest experiments in dramatic technique. He has justified his use of soliloquies and songs in this problem play. The problem of this play is

the same as that of the previous drama. There is a continuous struggle between Wealth and Poverty, and each of these two wins on different occasions although in the end victory goes to the life of poverty with courage and virtue.

The plot of the play is very interesting and the playwright has very beautifully portrayed the characters of Vidyā Bhūṣan, Acalā and Lakṣmī Dās. While the characters in most of Seth's other plays are mere types, here all these three characters have strong individual touches. In addition to representing certain creeds and ideals, they are essentially men and women of the world with usual powers and failings, ambitions and affections. Lakṣmidas is a multi-millionaire, who has earned his fortune by sucking the blood of poor labourers, although he gave them very high wages. But he is not only a capitalist; he is at the same time an extremely affectionate and soft-hearted father. He is stone hearted for the world, but for his beloved daughter he has a heart even softer than flower ---

लक्ष्मीदास—..... मुझे शायद सारे संसार का खून देखकर चक्कर न आयेगा, उसकी नदियां देखकर भी नहीं, पर बेटा, तेरे आंसुओं की दो बूंदें, हां, दो बूंदें मेरे पैर कंपाने के लिये, अरे! मुझे बहा तक देने के लिये काफी हैं। (Act I Scene 2)

Vidya Bhushan is a poor story-writer, who has received education with the help of a scholarship. He hates wealth which is earned with the blood of the poor. He and Acalā, the daughter of the multi-millionaire Lakṣmī Das are deeply in love. But he cannot marry her unless she bids good-bye to her father and all his wealth. While Acalā is prepared to part with all her rich heredity, she can, in no case, leave her father who is so very affectionate for this motherless girl. Vidya Bhuṣan leaves her, but has weakness still strong for her in his heart. Acalā, after all, accepts his conditions and marries him. Her affectionate father tries to bring Bhūṣan round, but the sentimental youth is too firm on his principles. Acalā, who had led a princely life so far, soon get disgusted with the life of poverty. She loses her patience and all the sacrifice that she undertook for the sake of her lover she looks upon as a momentary fit of wrong emotions. In a sharp exchange of words (Act III) she lays bare the inner most feelings, of her heart. She is still too weak for a life of dire poverty, which entails all hardships and sufferings. Displeased with her husband, she goes back to her father. In her

father's house she feels slighted when her father concentrates all his affections on her son and not on herself. She ~~succeeds in~~ returns to India and leads a life of poverty, away from her husband, in order to make her fit for her ideal husband. She succeeds in her effort and while she is packing for the journey to her husband the latter suddenly reaches her house. Now when Acalā has firmly followed the path pointed to her by her husband, the latter shows a weakness in his character. He changes his creed, and his bitter experiments of the world have taught him that wealth is necessary for a successful leading of life. Consequently Bhushan, who showed weakness, has to die while Acalā succeeds in this hard mission of life. The unexpected arrival of Vidya Bhushan in the end and his death have become a little melodramatic.

Acalā is a very sentimental girl, who is torn between the love of her father and Bhushan. She surrenders before Bhushan and accepts his conditions; she tries to live upto Bhushan's ideals, but fails. Again she get a rebuff at her father's house, decides to retreat and succeeds in her aim. On the other hand Bhushan, though very firm in the beginning and a long time after, loses all strength and inspiration when Acalā leaves him. In fact Acalā was her source of inspiration; she was the cause of his success and also her absence proved to be the cause of his failure.

In this drama Seth has introduced songs, contrary to the practice of all problem playwrights including Seth himself. He has also introduced frequent soliloquies in broken sentences. He has also inserted Sanskrit ~~sa~~ ślokas here and there and has occasionally made allusions to Hindu mythology and past history.

Seth's personal experience of a life of grandeur and wealth has enabled him to successfully present dazzling scene of wealth and grandeur. In most of his plays we meet millionaires and multi-millionaire with their life of extravagance and arrogance, their greed for honour & fame in public life; The atmosphere of his plays is that of aristocracy and his problems are of the life of rich and big people, e.g. of luxury and power, of political leadership and elections, of prestige and public applause, of extravagance and huge debts.

In all his plays, Seth has followed a descriptive and not a suggest-

ive style. He is frank and blunt and not ironical. His words and phrases are plain and not knotty and what he means to say he expresses in clear terms. In their dialogues, his chief characters put their respective point of view in a very friendly manner, in a mood of taking their words or arguments to the heart of the other man. They do not try to pick up quarrel with their opponents in view, but debate on different topic calmly and quietly. In this respect Seth's own character and his experiences in the political life have given this tendency to his style. Most of the conversations take place over the tea-table, or after lunch or dinner. His dialogues are, so we find, very simple and are never rhetorical or literary. In his latest plays, especially 'Garībī Yā Amīrī' he has intentionally introduced soliloquies, very long soliloquies, which are often boring, although Seth looks upon them as very dramatic and impressive. Only a very skilful and experienced actor can make these soliloquies interesting and dramtic. These soliloquies are, again, couched in so broken sentences, that, very realistic though they are, these long broken sentences often jar on the ears. Seth's attempt at accurate reproduction of conversation runs a considerable risk of boring the audience, which does not always consist only of superfine and highly-literary people.

In all his plays, Seth has used simple Hindustani, which is refined and regular. The language that he has put in the mouths of high people in these plays is dignified and suits their position and culture. On certain occasions, the author has inserted English phrases and sentences, in order to represent the talk of the educated aristocratic people as faithfully as possible. Again, he has used different dialects for people of different provinces (as in 'Sevā Patha') ; he has put local dialects in the mouths of servants and attendants as in 'Tyāga Yā Grahana', सिद्धान्त-स्वातन्त्र्य etc.

'Swarga Kī Jhalak' (1938) of Upendra Nath Ashka is a social drama, which is based on the problem of female education. The author believes that while the illiterate, uncultured and rustic woman of yesterday was unfit for making the family life very happy, the highly educated super-fine and cultured woman of today is equally a failure in that respect. Therefore the playwright says ---

"जहां शिक्षा पाकर नारी स्वाभिमान, आत्म-विश्वास, व्यापक ज्ञान तथा समाज सेवा की भावनायें पाये, वहां उसे मानसिक सन्तुलन भी कायम रखना चाहिये। तभी समाज में स्वस्थता कायम रह सकेगी। आज का शिक्षित नवयुवक गतयुग के दाम्पत्य

जीवन को नरक समझता हुआ — बाह्य प्रसाधनों से जगमगाती हुई विदेशी शिक्षा-संस्कृति की प्रतिमा आधुनिक नारी की ओर आकृष्ट होता है और उसके साहचर्य से स्वर्ग बसाने के रंगीन सपने देखता है, परन्तु जीवन के अधिक निकट आकर उसे अनुभव होता है कि यह स्वर्ग उसके मन का ही रंगीन भ्रम है और कुछ नहीं।" etc.

In this play the author discloses that what a modern young man looks upon as heaven is nothing more than a mere illusion of his mind. All that glitters is not gold; the real sense of this maxim comes home to Mr. Ashok at Professor Rajendra's house and at night in the concert. He, consequently, gives up the idea of Umā, a first class B. A. girl and marries Rakṣā who is moderately educated.

Like Seth Govind Das, Ashka also does not penetrate deep into the depths of human life. But his grasp of external problems is very firm and forceful, and his observation is very keen. Occasionally Ashka has tried to play the role of a reformer, and in preaching for or against some social custom or practice he has spoiled the suggestive effect of his satire. As in his 'Chaṭā Beṭā' and others plays, so we find here also his language betraying influence of Punjabi. The author has achieved good success in technique and scene-setting.

'Dhīre Dhīre' (1939) of Vrindā Vanalāla Varmā is a political satire: its theme is based on contemporary politics of the country. In a satirical way the playwright refers to the policy of धीरे धीरे (slow and steady) of the Congress government, when the Congress accepted the ministeries in various provinces before the second Great War. The Congress government had to face various difficulties and to solve numerous problems of the country; but instead of taking quick strides towards various problems, the government adhered to the policy of working slowly until its short period of government was over.

In this drama the author indirectly critices the sluggish movement of the Congress ministeries, which did practically nothing in their short term. But while he does not support the policy of the Congress government, he, at the same time, does not sharply and bitterly criticise it. In dealing with this theme, the author has kept up his mental balance and has not lost temper or shown bitterness in his irony. The entire atmosphere

of the play is confused, by which the author perhaps means to hint at the confused state of affairs during Congress regime. There are certain discrepancies in characterisation ; Mīrā's character is rather inconsistent. How can an illiterate country woman reasonably take active part in political matters of her country ? Similarly some other defects can be detected by a close study of this drama, which does not prove to be a great work of art.

' In 'Angūr Kī Beṭī'[1] (1937) , Pt. Govind Vallabh Pant emphasizes the evils of drinking. The problem of this play is not very subtle and therefore does not leave much room for minute analysis and keen observation. The evil of drinking although it is a very old theme, has still by no means died out today.

'Jīta Kī Hāra'[2] (1942) of Candra Śekhara Pānde deals with another old theme, which has so often been dealt with by Munshi Prem Chand in his stories and novels and in 'Netronmilan' of Miśra brothers. The author refers to the theme of this play in the following wods ---

"मुकद्दमा लड़ने के कारण किस प्रकार दोनों पक्ष तबाह हो जाते हैं और वकील तथा निठल्लों का भला होता है, इसी बात का सजीव चित्रण इस नाटक में किया गया है। मुकद्दमा से केवल धन ही की हानि नहीं होती, वरन् झूठ, छल, कपट, ईर्ष्या, वैर इत्यादि दुर्गुण मन में घर कर लेते हैं।" etc.

The play is of mediocre merit and has no outstanding feature to elicit the special praise of the reader or the spectator. Still, the author has achieved ample success in producing a very realistic atmosphere of the country side. He puts before our eyes a clear and true picture of village-life, with all its evils, jealousies and neighbourly hostilities. Two neighbours quarrel with each other on a very minor question of land, come to blows with each other and then go to the court. Rāmadhanī and Sukhayī are two typical villagers, who are possessed of false pride and each wants to defeat the other at the cost of his own ruin. The author wants to show to these people that even their victory (जीत) is in fact their defeat (हार) when they have lost their all and are left no better than beggars. The character of Govind betrays an influence of Gandhiji's personality on the author's mind.

'Kashmir Kā Kāntā'[3] (1948) is the latest drama by Vṛndāvana Lāla Varmā In this play the author deals with the question of the invasion of Kashmir by the tribal raiders, [4] tries to prove that in fact this is a well-organised

1. अंगूर की बेटी. 2. जीत की हार. 3. कश्मीर का कांटा.

preplanned and regular attack by Pakistan and not merely a raid by the tribal people. This drama has been staged several times with success, although there is very little of action in it.

The play refers to the first few days of Kashmir invasion, when Pakistan had declared to celebrate their 'Īd' festival at Srinagar. Brig. Rajendra Sinha of the Kashmir army resolved to frustrate this plan of the Pakistanis, and while defending his state from a terrible attack by the enemy, he and his 142 comrades (which included two women also), sacrificed their lives for their mother-land. In the introduction the author writes ---

"उनको कहीं से भी किसी प्रकार की सहायता की आशा न थी। सब सहारे टूट चुके थे। फिर भी इन वीरों ने देश-सेवा के लिये अपने सिरों पर कफ़न बांधे। इन में कुछ स्त्री डाक्टर भी थीं। वीरता में वे अपने भाइयों से पीछे नहीं रहीं।

वे सब २४ अक्टूबर को युद्ध में बलिदान हो गये -- etc."

The author has portrayed Brig. Rajendra Sinha, Major Bhīma Sinha, their attendant and the two lady doctors as fearless and bold soldiers, who are not afraid of death. They sacrifice their lives like brave sons and daughters of Kashmir ; the author has not shown any scene of death or murder on the stage. The Muslim raiders who are captured by Brig.'s men disclose all their master's plan. The author criticises the behaviour of Muslim soldiers, who betrayed the Brig. and joined the raiders in this attack. The play is mostly a conversation between different persons and there is very little of action for plot-construction.

Chapter XXI **LYRICAL DRAMA.**

Broadly speaking Lyrical drama is a play written entirely in verse. But the use of Verse alone is not sufficient to give any play the title of lyrical drama. In addition to verse, the essential element of lyrical drama is the excessive flow of sentiment. And sentiment being the first and foremost requisite of a lyrical play, the abundance of action that we find in general drama, is obviously lacking here. Consequently the conflict recorded in a lyrical drama is not external ; it is not between various contending persons, principles or situations. On the other hand the conflict in lyrical drama is mainly internal: here we shall find one feeling of mind contending with the other. In other words mental strife is the domnant feature of lyrical drama, and wherever in such plays external struggle is introduced, it is done just for the purpose of intensifying the internal conflict. But in spite of the lack of much action, lyrical drama is chiefly meant for the stage. It is not relished more by recitation as a dramatic poem certainly is. A dramatic poem can be dramatized, but it can be equally and even more enjoyed when read or heard. On the other hand lyrical drama, although it can be read and listened too, is enjoyed most in performance alone.

In Sanskrit drama verse occupies a distinguished position ; but there is not a single play which is written entirely and exclusively in verse. The same is true of Hindi drama of the ninteenth century. In Bengali Tagore's 'Citrā' and D.L. Roy's 'Sītā' are excellent examples of this type of drama. In English, the lyrical dramas of Shelley, Browning and Swinburne are well-known. But in Hindi literature, this side is highly under-developed and Prasad's 'Karuṇālaya'[1] seems to be the first drama of this type.

The main theme of 'Karuṇālaya' has been drawn by Prasada from 'Sunah

1. करुणालय.

Chapter XIV

LYRICAL DRAMA

Broadly speaking lyrical drama is a play written entirely in verse. But the use of verse alone is not sufficient to give any play the title of lyrical drama. In addition to verse, the essential element of lyrical drama is the excessive flow of sentiment. And sentiment being the first and foremost requisite of a lyrical play, the abundance of action that we find in general drama, is obviously lacking here. Consequently the conflict recorded in a lyrical drama is not external; it is not between various contending persons, principles or situations. On the other hand the conflict in lyrical drama is mainly internal; here we shall find one feeling of mind contending with the other. In other words mental strife is the dominant feature of lyrical drama, and wherever in such plays external action is introduced, it is done just for the purpose of intensifying the internal conflict. But in spite of the lack of much action, lyrical drama is chiefly meant for the stage. It is not polished much by recitation as a dramatic poem certainly is. A dramatic poem can be dramatised, and it can be equally and even more enjoyed when read or heard. On the other hand lyrical drama, although it can be read or listened to, is enjoyed most in performance alone.

In Sanskrit drama verse occupies a distinguished position; but there is not a single play which is written entirely and exclusively in verse. The same is true of most drama of the nineteenth century. In Bengali Tagore's 'Chitra' and D.L. Roy's 'Sita' are excellent examples of this type of drama. In English, the lyrical dramas of Shelley, Browning and Swinburne are well known. But in Hindi literature, this side is highly unrepresented. Prasada's 'Karunalaya' seems to be the first drama of this type.

The main theme of 'Karunalaya' was taken by Prasada from 'Aitareya

Śepa Ākhyāna' of the Aitreya Brāhmaṇa. The playwright has changed the latter part of the story either after his own inclination or perhaps under the influence of some other mythological source. Raja Hariś-candra is enjoying a boat journey when he is reminded, all of a sudden, of his promise to sacrifice his only son Rohita to god Varuna. The king agrees to carry out his word, but his youthful son refuses to be sacrificed. He is tenderly attached to the world, the joys and beauties whereof have great attraction for him.

Having disobeyed his father's words, Rohita retires into a jungle. There he chances upon the starving sage Ajīgarta and his family. With the hunger-stricken sage he strikes a bargain, and purchases his middle son 'Śunah-Śepa' for a hundred cows. Now Rohita returns to his father's court; the father reprimands him and threatens to disinherit him. Rohita argues that he evaded death just for the good of his father. Firstly, with his death, who would have succeeded Hariś-candra. And secondly he says ---

पुत्र न रहता तो क्या होता कौन फिर
देता पिण्ड तिलोदक यह भी समझिये।

Anyhow the preparations of sacrifice begin. That moment is at once very terrible and touching when the father (Ajīgarta) agrees to butcher his son with his own hands for another hundred cows. Everyone else had refused to slaughter the sacrificial animal, who in the present case was the son of a sage. The tensity of the situation reaches a very high pitch here, but this sharpness and piquancy of situation is soon lost when Viśvāmitra arrives there with Suvratā, and discloses the real identity of ~~xxxxx~~ Śunah Śepa. He reveals that the victim is their son and not that of Ajīgarta.

In this play, which is one of the earliest attempts of Prasada, the playwright has not very much succeeded in portraying a deep mental conflict. The plot provides the author with several occasions where he could have displayed his power of depicting the mental conflict of his characters. He could have described with great force the mind of Haris-candra when it is torn between duty and affection. He has weakness for his only son, and yet has profound regard for his own word. In the same way the author depicts no conflict in the mind of Ajīgarta when he agrees to sell off his son, and later on to slaughter him. And the revelation of the secret of Śunah-Śepa's life greatly weakness the spirit of conflict in the drama.

But still the play is not lacking in sentiment. At several places (especially the utterances of starving Ajigarta) the speeches are dripping with sentiment. The author has shown good control over language and metre. But inspite of all its merits, 'Karunālaya' does not befit the pen of a great playwright like Prasada, and we can have the only consolation that it was his earliest attempt at drama.

The next lyrical drama is 'Anagha'[1] by Maithili Sarana Gupta.[2] In this drama again the lyrical and even the dramatic element is very little and weak. The abundance of action in this drama does not leave much room for a minute psycho-analysis of the characters. The conflict, therefore, in this play is not internal or mental but it is between external situations. In fact the author has written this play under a strong influence of contemporary ideas, and Magha is apparently representative of Gandhian Philosophy. On the whole 'Anagha' does not occupy any place of merit in the history of lyrical drama.

Premi's 'Swarna- Vihān'[3] also betrays a deep influence of contemporary thought. It deals with the principle of non-violence and describes its ultimate victory over violence. To a theme of profound patriotism Premi has given a flavour of amorous sentiment. The author describes the political awakening of the country, which, in its zeal and rashness, wants to resort to violent action. But the poet preaches them the doctrine of Ahimsa in the following words ---

नहीं ~~नहीं~~ नहीं रे पगले यौवन,
जीत प्रेम से पापाचार।
अरे पाप से पाप मिटाना
महा भूल है, व्यर्थ विचार।
. . . .

कहीं आग से आग बुझाना
है सम्भव, है युवक विचार।
सत्य धर्म जिस ओर रहेंगे
उसी ओर होंगे करतार।

It seems as if Mahatma Gandhi is delivering a sermon of truth, affection and non-violence to the fiery youth of his country who want to resort to violence and stern action for the achievement of their goal.

1. अनघ. 2. मैथिली शरण गुप्त. 3. स्वर्ण- विहान

Although the poet has given ample proof of his power of poetry, of presenting beautiful word-pictures and expressing delicate sentiments, yet the dramatic element is not very strong in this play. There is a lack of tense situations and keen psycho-analysis in this drama. The hero of the play feels the need of something else —— in addition to his ideals of service and sacrifice —— for the contentment of his heart. And when he attains that 'more' for which he had been yearning for long, he suddenly loses self-control. Well, this was the spot where the playwright could have displayed great power of psycho-analytical characterisation ; he could have described the inner conflict of hero's mind in a very forceful manner, and that would have greatly enhanced the beauty of this lyrical drama. The expression of sentiments here gets so swift and strong that it looks unnatural and artificial. Still 'Svarṇa Vihāna' is a somewhat better attempt at lyrical drama than 'Anagha'.

But the greatest lyrical playwrights of this period are Udaya Śankar Bhatta and Seth Govind Das. Bhatta has written three beautiful lyrical dramas -- 'Matsya Gandhā'[1], 'Viśvāmitra'[2] and 'Rādhā'[3]. The principal character in 'Matsya-Gandhā' is that of the fisherman's daughter, who was known as Matsya Gandha before her marriage with King Śantanu, after which she received the name Satyavatī. The youthful maiden gets impatient at the exhilarating touch of youth, which produces a thrill in her bosom. At the enchanting sight of lovely nature, her youthful passions begin to rise, but she suddenly realizes that she is not free and independent like Nature --

दुःख-हीन, लक्ष्य-हीन, स्वर-हीन, लय-हीन
एक ही प्रमत्त-मीत एक ही प्रमत्त गीत।
ऐसे ही तो मैं भी बही जा रहा हूँ किन्तु मैं तो
नाविका हूं, केवट की बेटी, काम है जिसका है
पार पंहुचाना। नहीं, लहर सी मुक्त हूँ मैं, (scene I)

Just at that moment Ananga (Cupid) makes his appearance. He introduces himself to the emotional girl with the following words --

. . . . जीवन में तृप्ति-हीन तृष्णा, . . . सैंकड़ों वासन्त हास,
शतशत उद्गार, शत शत हाहाकार,
प्रणयों में पीड़ित, हृदय का स्वप्न छन्द। (scene 1)

Matsya-gandhā finds Cupid of the following manner --

कैसे तुम सुन्दर, ज्यों मिश्रण हो शैशव का,
यौवन का, तारिका का, विद्यु का विलास सब। (Scene I)

---

1. मत्स्यगंधा. 2. विश्वामित्र. 3. राधा.

Ananga wishes to give her a boon of lasting youth ; but the girl looks upons herself as too small, too insignificant to receive such a high blessing. But when Ananga disappears, the suppressed sentiments of the maidan's mind get too strong and she,

घूमता सा देखती अज्ञात चक्र ऐसा चित्त,
रह रह, कांपती हैं रोम-राजियां निखिल।

While a storm is still raging in her mind and paralysing her power of discretion, the old sage Parāśara is seen by her side asking for her boat. The girl is afraid of the storm that is raging in the river as well as in her weak, emotional mind. Her following words of objection have a double meaning -- जीर्ण नाव, शीर्ण बल अनिल प्रबल। (Scene 2)

When they reach the mid stream, passion overpowers the young mind of old Parāśara and he invites Matsya-gandhā for enjoyment. But the fisher girl puts forward the following objection ---

यह तो अनय अभी, कैसे मान लूं मैं यह,
हीन जाति तो भी है समाज का अनन्त भय।
कैसे यह, आप ही बताइये, बताइये न ? (Scene 3)

The young girl objects of his invitation because she is afraid of society and not because her own mind is opposed to that action. In these words the playwright point out the difficulty not only of Matsya-gandhā but of woman in general. A woman is not always mentally opposed to what she actually abstains from in her daily life. She is in fact afraid of society and its scandal ; otherwise her free mind would have given quite another shape to her deeds and actions.

Parāśara answers her objections with force; he, with a passion-stricken mind, pleads that there is no Dharma, that there is nothing good or bad. What society looks upon as noble today may be turned into ignoble by circumstances the next day ; cf. मानता है मानव जिसे ही धर्म वस्तु आज
काल वही होती अविधेय नरलोक में। (Scene 3)

Matsya-gandhā is fully conscious that woman is easily swayed by passion, but she is also aware of her delicate position in society ;

नारी के स्वरूप, सुख, शोभा में छिपे हैं देव,
संख्याहीन अभिशाप, संख्याहीन यातना।
वासना का वेग बहता है अति भीम वहां।
है दुर्दमनीय। वह प्रलोभन-पुंज और

अप्राकबर्णी। नारी। एक श्वेततम पट सम
जिसपै तनिक बिन्दुपात भी कलंक है। (Scene 3)

But when the sage explains to her the self willed and independent working of different objects of Nature and says,

देखो, लघु सरितायें चलतीं विधान लिये
और वही पावस में बांध तोड़ चलतीं। (Scene 3)

the young girl accepts his argument, but before yielding to his sensuous desire she begs of him a boon of lasting youth and virginity. The sage admonishes her that even प्रिय भी सदा न प्रिय लगता . But when she insists on her demand, the sage at once agrees to give her that boon, at which she also atonce surrenders herself to his passion. The scene that follows is very significant and dramatic. The slowly rising passion of Matsya-gandhā's mind suddenly reaches its climax, and as if as a result of this, darkness suddenly spreads all round, and the following sounds shoot forth from that darkness --

(पहली आवाज़) — नाथ, वह कन्यकात्व है?
(दूसरी आवाज़) — वह भी कलंक-हीन।
(पहली आवाज़) — माननीय होगा क्या!
. . . .
(पहली आवाज़) — नाथ, वह इष्ट मुझे।
(दूसरी आवाज़) — एवमस्तु, एवमस्तु — (Scene 3)
(पहली आवाज़) — एवमस्तु प्रियतम।

The author means that while in darkness Matsya-gandhā and Parāśara are consummating their agreement, the arguments and counter-arguments that passed between them just before their private meeting still occupy the emotional mind of the girl. Here the tensity of the scene suddenly reaches its climax.

The fourth scene presents Matsyagandhā before us just after her indulgence with Parāśara. She feels a wonderfully romantic effect of that act on her :

क्या हुआ हा, कैसा यह, याद पड़ता न कुछ
रोम रोम बहा नवचेतन अनन्त आज,
और लगता है जैसे विश्व अभिनव ने ही
मद में उद्दाम का भर डाला मानो देह में।

Then she remembers her own weakness of heart,

मैं न कुछ कह सकी, रोक सकी न हाथ,
उन्हें इस कार्य से, अकार्य से विमूढ़ सी।

In the fifth scene we meet Matsyagandhā in the role of Satyavatī, King Śāntanu's wife. In the sixth she stands before us as a widow, and her everlasting youth proves to her the source of great distress and despair. Tired of this passion, she says --

Just as that time appears Ananga (Cupid) again, to add insult to her injury, or to remind her of her foolish act. She begs of Ananga -

ले लो, लो दिया जो लेलो, अविलम्ब है अनंग
दण्ड, यह लघु कार्य का अमेय है, महान है।

But Ananga goes away, only after making this reply --

पियो कण्ठ तक पियो ओंठ तक ढाल ढाल,
यौवन महान है, अलभ्य है जगत में।

And after this satirical remark of Ananga, the play ends, leaving Matsya-gandhā sorrowing over her foolish longing for a lasting youth. 'Matsya-gandhā' is an exceedingly beautiful lyrical drama in which the talented author has, in a very nice manner, described the conflict between the irrestible longing of a woman to remain ever-green and youthful, and the obstacles of Nature and society that restrict her free action. In the end, woman's passionate love of youth is defeated before impediments of Nature.

The plot of Bhatta's 'Viśvāmitra' is not very different from that of 'Matsya-gandhā', although the conflict described in the former is not of the latter's type. The plot of 'Viśvāmitra' is symbolic, and as the author himself says, Viśvāmitra represents the 'Man', Menaka the 'Woman' and Urvaśī, their mutual conflict. Viśvāmitra is the 'Man' and embodies pride and power. Menakā-the woman- personifies affection, love, tenderness and emotion. The eternal struggle that goes on between man and woman is the theme of this lyrical drama.

Viśvāmitra, who is an embodiment of pride, wants to have a perpetual command over the universe, and with this aim in view he begins his samādhi. Incidentally Menakā and Urvaśī arrive at that place. While Menakā has nothing but womanly affection and sweetness in her, Urvaśī has a tinge of the bitter also. When Urvaśī understands the purpose of Viśvāmitra's samādhi she protests against man's ambition to govern everything else in the world. In a fit of jealousy she says ---

जब नारी नर दोनों ही से सृष्टि है,
एक बड़ा छोटा हो क्यों कर दूसरा।

Menakā tries to satisfy her with this reply--

यद्यपि हम में नहीं भुजा का बुद्धि का,
बल, तो भी तो एक हृदय-बल पास है।
यदि चाहूं तो प्रभी तपस्वी को उठा,
नाच नचाऊं जड़ पुतली कर काम की।

Urvaśī who is convinced of the inferiority of woman-kind, doubts the boast of Menakā ; but Menakā is aware both of the power and weakness of man, and the weakness and strength of her own character. While Urvaśī deplores the weak, slave position of woman, Menakā extolls the greatness and strength of the same sex. The playwright has drawn a nice contrast in the following speeches of the two 'women' ---

उर्वशी — नारी प्राण-विहीन चेतना से रहित,
एक भावना-पुञ्ज पराई ग्रास है।
जो साधन है जग में मानव-सौख्य को,
~~वह विलास स्वच्छन्द~~
सुख होना है स्वयं, अपर का सुख सदा।
वह विलास स्वच्छन्द पुरुष के प्राण की,
मदिरा जिससे स्वयं नशा होता नहीं।

मेनका — वह सत्ता है, कोमल जग के तत्व की,
और कल्पना सहज विधाता हृदय के,
मानव के नैराश्य पुञ्ज में रूप की,
ज्योति-शिखा है नारी-नर की चाहना।
यदि इस जग में न रहे बुद्धि विवेक तो,
नारी कोमल हृदय-तन्तु की स्फुरणा।

In order to prove to Urvaśī the real strength and attraction of womans person, Menakā undertakes to defeat the haughty sage. At her mere wish Vasanta[1] and Ananga[2] make their appearance ; Viśvāmitra's samādhi is broken; his eyes successively give expression of surprise, anger, emotion and then of the exhilaration of passion. On one hand Menakā disregards his entreaties on the other the austere sage begins to realize more and more his foolishness in undertaking a life of hard penance and denying his body the pleasures of senses. When Menakā refuses to listen to his passionate appeals, he decides to commit suicide. But Menakā stops him ; and her object of achieving victory over man's pride being fulfilled, she surrenders herself to the sage.

After twelve years Menakā gives birth to a baby. Now Viśvāmitra's pride of man overpowers him again and after a little of conflict with his mind he abandons the new-born baby and goes away.

In this play although the author has devoted special attention to his depiction of human sentiments and emotions, and the lyrical element is, there-fore, abundant, yet the dramatic element and a minute psycho-analysis of characters is very weak. When Menakā makes her sudden appearance before the austere sage, the poet could have nicely described the innder conflict in Viśvāmitra's mind. His regard of his own pride and hard life would have come into sharp conflict with the irrestible attraction that Menakā's appear-ance produced in his mind. But the playwright has not added a single word in this connection. His. Viśvāmitra is, in a moment, overpowered by Menakā's beauty and attraction, and forgets his pride and prestige.

In 'Rādhā' which is Bhatta's latest attempt at lyrical drama, the poet describes Rādhā's attraction towards Kṛṣṇa, her self-surrender and final identification with her lord. In this play Rādhā embodies strong womanly passion and attachment, while Kṛṣṇa is not the romantic lover of the Puranic stories. He embodies knowledge and enlightenment. Consequentally the conflict of this drama is between passion and knowledge and not between worldly emotions on both sides ; it is, therefore, not very strong and sentimental. Again, in the last scene where Rādhā meets Kṛṣṇa, she gets besides herself with joy and begins to dance. And after her identification with Kṛṣṇa, the latter begins to deliver a long sermon. These are psycho-analytical inconsistencies. The author has spoiled the deep effect of these scenes by his resorting to verbosity and over-expression of sentiment. On the other hand his last stage-direction,
(धीरे धीरे सूर्यास्त होता है। कृष्ण और राधा का रूप अंधकार में एक हो जाता है और राधा-कृष्ण की प्रतिच्छवि उसी अंधेरे में दिखाई पड़ती है।)
is very significant and full of dramatic sense and beauty. This stage-direction is more useful in producing the necessary sentimental effect than the lengthy speech that precedes it.

In these lyrical dramas, Bhatta appears before us essentially as a lyrical poet. He has introduced a profound flow of sentiment, and a series of romantic pictures in these plays. At certain places his love of using

various figures of speech retards, to some extent, the spontaneous flow of sentiment and its free enjoyment, yet such occasions are not very frequent. His experience as a lyrical poet has brought him great success in these lyrical dramas, in which sentiment is abundant and action is scare. Here the poet could give a free hand to his imagination and emotions, which enhance the beauty of a lyric-play. On the other hand, in long plays where abundance of action is required and where excessive flow of sentiment retards the progress of the plot, Bhatta has been less successful due to his lyrical qualifications.

'Sneha Yā Swarga'[1] (1946) of Seth Govind Das is another very excellent lyrical drama. Its theme, which has been taken from Homer's Iliad, has been presented in beautiful Indian colours. The plot of this play moves round the eternal problem of love and woman's actions and reactions to it. Two young men are deeply in love and tenderly attached to a young girl, and the play is a nice representation of the inner strife of girl's mind, her actions and reactions to the affections and entreaties of her two lovers. Of all the lyrical dramas discussed above 'Sneha Yā Swarga' excels in its powerful depiction of the conflict in the minds of its principal characters.

The interest of the story and the beauty of the plot is enhanced by making one lover an ordinary man of the mortal world. Ajeya, the hero of the play, is a mortal youth who is deeply in love with Sneha Latā, a lovely maiden of the world. Both of them had been close friends since childhood, and now in youth that childish attachment has developed into deep love. Sneha Lata is so charming that Jayanta, son of Indra is moved by her surpassing beauty and asks her father for the hand of his daughter. The heroine is to choose between Ajeya and Jayanta — one is an ordinary mortal youth while the latter is a god, marriage with whom would make the mortal heroine also immortal and bring her the kingdom of heaven. Sneha Latā is put in a great dilemma ; her father, who is overpowered by his greed for wealth and divine glory, is in favour of Jayanta. But the girl, when she comes to know that Jayanta's love is nothing but mere lust for her beauty, while Ajeya's love is sincere and selfless, offers her hand to the mortal instead of the divine, thus proving to the world that a young girl values true love (Sneha) more even than heaven (Swarga).

1. स्नेह या स्वर्ग.

The play opens with a conversation between Jayanta and his sister Śucitā, who agrees to got to the mortal world to request Sneha Latā to choose her brother in the bridal-election. She gives an excellent definition of love in which she says --

इस प्रेम-प्रासाद के मुख्य तीन भाग हैं -
अपत्य-स्नेह नींव, दाम्पत्य वास-कक्ष है,
बन्धु-प्रेम आच्छादन, वृथा जिसके बिना।
भव्य से भव्य भवन की भी नींव, भित्तियां। etc.

In the second scene Ajeya is talking with his friend Prabhākara. He recollects reminiscences of his past years, when he used to play, sit, eat and quarrel with Sneha Latā in childhood. Then he compares his own love with that of Jayanta and says --

जयन्त स्वेच्छाचारी और अप्सरा विहारी
सहज, सत्य स्नेह क्या सोच भी न सकता।

He looks upon Jayanta's love as mere lust and deputes his friend Prabhākara to go to her beloved and guide her in that hour of suspense. He is so deep and desperate in love that he would not like to live, in case Prabhākara failed in his mission.

While Sneha Latā is still struggling with her mind, Śucitā decends from the sky in a shining aerial car. The playwright gives a very picturesque description of the aerial car, its glamour and aerial movement, but all this is kept behind the scenes, because this scene would have been impossible for effective stage performance. In a very powerful conversation with Śucitā, Sneha describes her impartiality to both the suitors. She has neither regard for Ajeya's past connections with her, nor attraction for Jayanta's divine wealth and immortality. Moreover, she is just to give her choice, since the real power of giving her to either of the suitors, she says, vests with her father. Now Jayanta wins her greedy father to his side.

The author has very nicely portrayed Sneha as an ideal and impartial girl, who would select her life-companion strictly on basis of merit. She remains unmoved by Śucitā's romantic description of heaven and immortality, as also by the friendly appeals of Prabhākara. When Prabhākara returns without success, Ajeya decides to go himself to save Sneha from Jayanta. He is not motivated by any selfish end, but as a true lover and well-wisher of Sneha, he wishes that she should not fall in evil hands.

But all of a sudden he hits upon a new plan. He would carry away Sneha by force, and would fight against Jayanta for his lady love. He goes to Sneha lata who is lost in deep though over the question of her marriage, and pleads that while he possessed none of the great powers and wealth of Jayanta, he excelled his rival in having true and genuine love for her. The love of gods is fickle, he says; it is lust and not love at all --

जयन्त है अनन्त और अनन्त उसकी
प्रेयसी भी है। स्नेह स्वर्ग का सदा
पारावत प्रेम सा, सारस सा नहीं स्नेह नहीं
उसके उर में प्रेम नहीं किन्तु है लालसा।

Sneha Latā is a very firm and resolute lady, who is very bold and independent in her thought and initiative. She goes with Ajeya to his house on the specific condition that he won't stand at all in her way of making a free and independent choice.

Now Jayanta challenges Ajeya for a duel. The playwright has introduced this outer conflict just to enhance the inner conflict in Sneha's mind, and to give an open trial to Ajeya's love. When Ajeya is ready to fight with Jayanta, Sneha tries to dissuade him with these words ---

स्नेहलता — अजेय, अब तक न तुमको चुना
समर समाप्ति पर चुन लूंगी यह भी
आश्वासन नहीं, अतः मृग मरीचिका है
शरीर के जूझ में दाव यह शरीरी का।

Ajeya and Sneha Latā exchanges arguments and counter-arguments. Ajeya makes a forceful expression of his love and sacrifice:

स्नेहलता — किन्तु प्राण-अर्पण आयोजय, अजेय, हो
कर रहे प्रत्यार्पण की निश्चितता बिना।
अजेय — बिना प्रत्यार्पण के अर्पण की महानता
प्रेम के पथ का पथिक ही जान सकता

फिर निज को अर्पण किया तुमने नहीं,
पर कर चुका मैं अर्पण अपने को,
मेरी ओर से बोली, बोली जा चुकी क्रय की।
बिना प्रत्यार्पण प्राण-अर्पण में तेज जो
प्रत्यार्पण-पश्चात कदाचित हो नहीं सकता।

With these and other arguments of Ajeya, Sneha Latā is convinced of Ajeya's true love. She goes after him to the battle-field with the final decision that in case Ajeya comes out victorious, she will marry him. But in case he is killed in battle, she too will follow him to heaven after performing sati.

In the contest, which is although ill-matched, Ajeya gives wonderful evidence of his skill of warfare and spirit of ideal heroism. In the thick of battle, Indra arrives on the scene, asks both the heroes to stop fighting and gives Sneha Latā a few minutes to arrive at a final decision. Sneha Latā retires to loneliness with Capalā and compares Jayanta and Ajeya --

. . . . . . जहां स्वर्ण, रत्नों की
राशि राशि रेणु है, किन्तु नेह नीर का
सागर नहीं, गागर नहीं, बिन्दु भी नहीं।
स्वेच्छा चारी औ" अप्सरा विहारी जयन्त में
आशा है अभिमान की, स्नेह स्नेह का नहीं।
मुख से, मुद्रा से, स्वर से, शब्दों से, सबसे,
सीख, बार-बार ध्वनि एक ध्वनित होती
लालसा, लालसा, लालसा, लालसा, लालसा।
और इसके विपरीत विनम्रता कितनी,
त्याग कितना, तप कितना, प्रेम कितना,
उस अनूप, उस अभिराम, अजेय में।

In the end she puts the wedding garland round Ajeya's neck and says--

बालकाल का स्नेह यौवन में प्रेम बना।
स्नेह या स्वर्ग - बना जीवन संघर्ष मेरा।
अन्त में हुआ है विजयी स्नेह, स्वर्ग हारा।
हृदय कहता मिलेगा स्वर्ग-सुख यहां।

In this way true Love triumphs over heavenly wealth and immortality. Seth has depicted a perpetual internal struggle in Sneha Latā's character: from the beginning till the end she is thinking on love and grandeur: closely and carefully she compares Ajeya and Jayanta, and after a hard struggle her mind decides in favour of sincere love. The author has also introduced physical conflict in the play in introducing scene of battle between the two lovers; the speeches of most of the characters, especially Ajeya and Sneha Latā, are very emotional. The playwright has maintained a regular flow in his language; frequently he has tried to give colour to his language by using alliteration--

शुभ्रांशु - शोभित शुभ्र शर्वरी पूर्णिमा की — (Act I, Scene 2)
चम - चम, चमक - चमक चक्षुओं को पे — (Act I, Scene 3)
घन घुमड़ - घुमड़ घोर घोष करते — (Act II, Scene 4)

'Tārā' of Bhagvatī Caraṇa Varmā is another fine lyrical drama which abounds in mental struggle. From the beginning to the end, there is a sharp conflict between two contending emotions of heroine's mind — her youthful passion and her regard for ethical morality. Her character is an excellent study of the psycho-analysis of a young woman's mind where one emotion prevails for a while, and is then overpowered by another contending emotion, which the latter gives way to the former after a short while. Tārā, the wife of Bṛhaspati, is sick of the self-control of her husband. Her passionate mind longs for sensual enjoyment, and tries to lead her astray to ignoble acts. But presently she strives to suppress the evil desire that was rising in her bosom, with the words --

भ्रम है, भ्रम है निपट पाप की प्रेरणा,
है कर्त्तव्य प्रधान और आराधना।

But the other feeling of her mind asks her, whether she means आराधना (propitation) of her husband or of the law of Nature and the yearnings of her thristing heart. Her power of reason points to the propitation of her husband, while her emotional mind longs for sensual pleasures. Bṛhaspati, her mind argues, is the object of her 'reverence' and not of her 'love'.

When Bṛhaspati comes to know of this conflict in his wife's mind, he gives her a discourse on the transitory nature of the world and the evil basis of sensual passion. This puts down Tara's passion for a while; but at the sight of Gandramā (Moon), the disciple of Bṛhaspati a storm of passion again rises in her mind, and there is again a strong tussel between her ethical emotions and youthful passions. Suppressing her passions with all her might Tara says -- पाप-वृत्ति तुम विजय पा सकोगी नहीं।

Candramā addresses Tara as his 'mother' and this address gives a rebuff to Tara's rising passion. But Candramā's heart is, at its bottom, overtaken by Tara's youth and beauty, and passion suddenly rises in his heart too.

Bṛhaspati goes out of his hermitage and leaves Gandrama behind to look after it. Now Gandrama ponders over his feelings of love and passion-

पतन! प्रेम क्या तुम यथार्थ ही पतन हो,
नहीं विश्व के निर्णय का आधार क्या?
अरी वासना क्या तुम निश्चित पाप हो?
नहीं कुछ नहीं तुम तो केवल प्रकृति हो।

And he atonce remembers what Bṛhaspati, his Guru, taught him the same day-

प्रकृति स्वयं है पाप पुण्य कुछ भी नहीं।

Having thus justified his passion for his preceptor's wife, Candramā extends her the invitation for what she had been thirsting for --

तुम हो झंझावात भयानक शान्ति की,
मैं अशान्ति का उदधि गहन गंभीर हूँ,
आओ मिलकर आज विश्व को उलट दें।

There is again a hard struggle between her passion and sense of morality; a few arguments and entreaties are exchanged, and in the end Tārā surrenders herself to the passions of Candramā. Later on Bṛhaspati curses both Tārā and Candramā, for this treachery, to become immoveable (जड़) and thus pacifies his wrath.

'Tārā' is an excellent lyrical drama. Inspite of its scarcity of stage-directions, it has a profundity of inner conflict and psycho-analysis of youthful mind. The author nicely portrays the condition of a young woman, who has moral duty and feelings, but who is at the same time overpowered by her youthful passions.

With the exception of Prasada's Karuṇālaya, all these lyrical dramas belong to the modern period (1930-48). They are very few in number, and the dominating tendency today is to write dramas all the in prose or at least mostly in prose. Prose one-act-plays are getting more and more popular every-day, while no desire or demand comes forth from any direction for lyrical plays. Moreover, it is very difficult to find an interested audience for lyrical dramas these days, when even prose dramas, which are easier to understand and enjoy, are not receiving any encouragement from the audience, greatly attracted towards cinema as they are. But we are hopeful that great playwrights like Seth Govind Das, Udaya Śankara Bhatta and others will continue to contribute to this artistic and emotional branch of Hindi drama at least for the sake of talented and emotional readers.

Chapter XXII

ALLEGORICAL DRAMA

'Kāmanā' of Jaya Sankara Prasada, which we have discussed in Chapter XV, is the first original attempt at allegorical drama. Another symbolic play called 'Deva-Māyā-prapañcha Nāṭaka' was written before Prasada, but that is not available today. 'Kāmanā' is the first and one of the most beautiful allegorical dramas in Hindi. After 'Kāmanā' appeared 'Jyotsnā'[1] or 'Moonshine' (1934) of the celebrated poet Sumitrā Nandana Pant[2]. In this allegorical drama too we meet Pant more in the guise of a poet than a playwright. The plot is practically nil: getting disgusted with the trouble and turmoil of the world and the destructive policy of its inhabitants Indu (Moon) hands over the reigns of his government to his Queen Jyotsnā (Moonshine). Jyotsnā comes down to the Earth, and with the help of Pavana[3] and Surabhi[4] which assume the form of Svapna[5] and Kalpanā[6] respectively, she succeeds in establishing on the mortal earth a new heaven of affection, beauty and higher standard of morality. This is all the plot that is covered in five acts.

In Act I we come to know from the conversation between Sandhyā[7] and Chhāyā[8] that Moon intends to hand over his government of the earth to his wife Moonshine with the hope that she will create a heaven of joy and happiness there. In Act II both the King and Queen appear in their fullest glory, and the Queen is instructed accordingly by King Moon. In Act III, Jyotsnā descends on the mortal world in the company of Pavana and Surabhi. She asks Pavana the real condition of the mortal world, and he describes the same in a very powerful and effective manner ---

"एक ओर धर्मान्धता, अन्ध-विश्वास, और जीर्ण-रूढियों से संग्राम चल रहा है, दूसरी ओर वैभव और शक्ति का मोह मनुष्य की छाती को लौह-शृंखला की तरह जकड़े हुए है। बुद्धि का अहंकार, त्रिशूल की तरह बढ़कर मनुष्य के देवत्व-प्रिय स्वभाव एवं आदर्श-प्रिय हृदय को स्वार्थ की नोक से छेद रहा है।"

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1. ज्योत्स्ना. 2. सुमित्रा नन्दन पन्त. 3. पवन. 4. सुरभि. 5. स्वप्न. 6. कल्पना. 7. सन्ध्या. 8. छाया

Just at that time the grasshopper, who brings his message from the world, in a word describes the condition of his world --

जो है समर्थ, जो शक्तिमान,
जीने का है अधिकार उसे,
उसकी लाठी उसका बैल विश्व
प्रजता सभ्य संसार उसे।

At this Jyotsnā finds it impossible to delay his work. She transforms Pavana and Surabhi into Svapna and Kalpanā respectively, and orders them to establish before man, with the help of Art and Music, higher ideals of humanity and to turn man from materialism to spiritualism, from the gross to the subtle. Svapna and Kalpanā accept her orders, enter into the mind of the sleeping mankind, and inspire them with new feelings and nobler emotions like truth, mercy, sacrifice, art, affection and devotion. Consequently a new era of love and fraternity dawns on the Earth. After finishing her task on Earth, Jyotsnā returns to her divine world. In Act IV we find that, with the abundance of nobler sentiments, the baser emotions of mankind gradually lose their existence in darkness; and the coming of dawn is announced. In Act V we find the mortal world beaming with light ; with the coming of dawn heavenly bliss descends on Earth and every thing on earth begins to resound with songs of joy.

The playwright has, in a nice manner, expressed his sentiments on politics, love, art and ethics. If we judge this play from the point of view of plot-development and characterisation, it is a worst failure. Its plot has no action, nor is there scope for characterisation. Although the impressions of some characters like Indu, Jyotsnā and Pavana etc. are very clear yet they have no concrete personality. They are mere personifications of some ideas and emotions. The conversation of these characters also has no force and fragility ; it is rigid, fundamental and uninteresting. But in an allegorical drama like 'Jyotsnā' these essential elements of drama occupy a secondary position. The primary importance in this play is of its romantic scene-setting, its melodious songs and in the end, its psycho-logical purpose

Undoubtedly Pant has achieved remarkable success in his excellent and picturesque scene-setting. Poet's very minute observation and gifted imagination has enabled him to draw very lively and realistic pictures of abstract

things like Jyotsnā, Sandhyā and Surabhi. In the following words the author draws a concrete picture of Surabhi.

"आई और पुष्पों के हृदय से उच्छ्वसित दुर्निवार कामना सी सुरभि, पुष्पों की चटकीली पंखुड़ियों से लदी, लालसा से लाल पल्लवों की चोली पहने, मदिरगन्ध निर्गत करती, केसरी अलकों में रजनी - गन्धा की माला बांध रही है।"

Similarly in delineating concrete pictures of other airy objects, Pant has displayed his remarkable skill and keen power of observation. Moreover, he has introduced different kinds of songs which have been put in the mouths of different natural objects. If at one place there is a languid song of Chhāyā, at another there is a murmuring music of Pavana and the twinkling tune of the stars and so on. All these songs give ample evidence of Pant's delicate emotions, his flight of imagination, variety of word-power and his power of expression.

As we have already said, the author has a psychological purpose behind this play. In writing this play Pant means to arrange his sublime thoughts on various political, social and ethical topics. In a nice manner has he given his expressions on truth, affection, art and government. It is in fact with a feeling of joy and happiness for the world and with an idea of sublimating the life of man that Pant has written this allegorical drama.

The next allegorical drama is 'Chalanā'[1] (1940) of Bhagwatī Prasāda Vājapeyī. This drama is markedly different from Prasada's 'Kāmanā' and Pant's 'Jyotsnā'; while there is a floral world in the background of 'Kāmanā', and a world of Moonshine in 'Jyotsnā', in 'Chalanā' we meet our contemporary society with its conflicts and prblems. Its characters have not descended from the stars, nor are they luminaries of the divine world. They, on the other hand are regular members of our mortal society and are persons like, a degree student, a film-star, a retired session judge and his daughter etc.

'Chalanā', though an allegorical drama, dilates upon the eternal problem of woman. Kalpanā represents a woman who is restless and ambitious, and has inclination for Vilāsa (Enjoyment) Balarāja is the man, who is serious, stiff, proud and restrained. Vilāsa is another exterior form of man which is attractive, and seducing, cultured but infirm. Kalpanā, although she has a profound respect for Balarāja's high power of character, is still disappointed by his restrained and contented life. She turns to

1. छलना.

Vilāsa, whose external glamour attracts her for a while ; but he lacks the magnetic power of manhood, and therefore fails to touch the delicate chords of Kalpanā's mind. Thus Kalpanā wavers between two powers, the one of the internal power of character and manhood, and the second that of its outward show. And this is the छलना of her life. The author means to suggest that if woman disregards or is disappointed with the real but natural man and is drawn towards the artificial and attractive man, she is bound to meet a tragic end.

The author dilates upon the different instincts and emotions of mankind in the person of these characters. Kalpanā represents that side of woman's mind which is drawn towards artificial attraction of man but has also regard for the deeper and stronger qualities of man's character. Kāmanā is the friend of Vilāsa, and both have a similar nature and temprament. But inspite of their mutual attachment and friendship they fail to possess each other as if they are aware of their respective drawbacks. She then goes to Bombay and reappears before Balarāja in the form of Nidrā (sleep), a film-star. Although Balarāja feels interested in her for a while, still he keeps himself honourably away from her. The playwright means to suggest that Kāmanā may mislead a man of strength and character, only for a while, under the effect of some illusion or sleep (Nidrā), but he would never stoop down to have any close connection with her. Campī, the third female character represents the ideal and orthodox role of woman. She has been abandoned by her husband, but she is contented by his mere memory. The idealistic and selfless character of Campī keeps her more happy than both Kalpanā and Kāmanā, although she is in much worse state of affairs.

The characters of 'Chalanā' as we have said, are more concrete and fleshy than those of 'Jyotsnā' and 'Kāmanā'. They are symbolic only in name, but in fact they have ample individuality and independent personality like the characters of other dramas. The play can be nicely produced on the screen, and even on the stage it can achieve success. There is sentiment and suggestion in language and sweetness in songs. At the same time we can point out some drawbacks of this drama. Some of the characters have no relation with the main plot. Campī, Sūra and Navīna serve only to enhance

Vilāsa, whose external glamour attracts her for a while ; but he lacks the magnetic power of manhood, and therefore fails to touch the delicate chords of Kalpanā's mind. Thus Kalpanā wavers between two powers, the one of the inherent power of character and manhood, and the second that of the outward show. And this is the [illegible] of her life. The author means to suggest that if woman disregards or is disappointed with the real but natural man and is drawn towards the artificial and attractive man, she is bound to meet a tragic end.

The author dilates upon the different instincts and emotions of mankind in the person of these characters. Kalpanā represents that side of woman's mind which is drawn towards artificial attraction of man but has also regard for the deeper and stronger qualities of man's character. Ānandā is the friend of Vilāsa, and both have a similar nature and temperaments. But inspite of their mutual attachment and friendship they fail to possess each other as if they are aware of their respective weakness. She then goes to Bombay and reappears before Saluṇāja in the form of Nidrā (sleep), a film-star. Although Saluṇāja feels interested in her for a while, still he keeps himself honourably away from her. The playwright means to suggest that Ānandā may mislead a man of strength and character, only for a while under the effect of some illusion or sleep (Nidrā), but he could never stoop down to have any close connection with her. Gauri, the third female character represents the ideal and orthodox role of woman. She has been abandoned by her husband, but she is contented by his mere memory. The idealistic and sacrificing character of Gauri keeps her more happy than both Kalpanā and Ānandā, although she is in much worse state of affairs.

The characters of 'Chalanā' as we have said, are more concrete and fleshy than those of 'Jyotsnā' and 'Sphaṭana'. They are symbolic only in name, but in fact they have ample individuality and independent personality like the characters of other dramas. The play can be nicely produced on the screen, and even on the stage it can achieve success. There is action and animation in language and movement in scenes. At the same time we can point out some drawbacks of this drama. Some of the characters have no relation with the main plot. Gauri, Rāma and Nirjhar serve only to enhance

the dramatic effect. What emotion does Navina represent, and what has he to do with the plot ? He is there just to make the manly qualities of Balarāja more clear and impressive. Similar other defects can be found in the technique and art of the play. But inspite of all these defects, 'Chalanā' is more real and interesting than other allegorical dramas.

While 'Kāmanā' and 'Jyostnā' aim at the creation of an ideal world of bliss and joy, 'Chalanā' is just a psycho-analytical study of human mind. The allegorical element in this play is very scanty, and it can be easily read as an interesting story. It is a delineation of our everyday life, in which the problem of woman has been put before us in a realistic manner. No attempt is made to idealize the atmosphere of the drama, which now remains quite faithful and true to our life.

Of yet a different nature is 'Navarasa'[1] (1941) a symbolic play by Seth Govind Das. In this play Seth has personified the nine principal Rasas (sentiments) of Sanskrit dramaturgy, and has discussed the present day problem of war and aggression on the basis of these personifications. The hero of the play is Vīra-Sinha, who represents the Heroic sentiment. The heroine Prema-latā, is symbolic of the Amorous; Rudradadeva personifies the Raudra (Terrible), Bhīma represents the Dreadful (भयानक) Līlā stands for the Humorous, Karunā personifies the Pathetic, Śāntā represents the Quiet (शान्त) Adbhuta Candra (अद्भुतचन्द्र) personifies the Marvellous, ग्लानिदत्त the Disgustful (बीभत्स) sentiment. The Affectionate (वात्सल्य) has been renamed Madhu, due to its spontaneous sweetness.

Not only has the playwright given appropriate names to his personifications of different sentiments, he has also conformed to classical description of the colours of these sentiments. Līlā puts on white garments; Rudrasena appears red, Bhīma has a black make up ; Vīra Sinha dresses in golden and Adbhuta Candra in yellow garments. The author has tried to inspire his personifications with their respective sentiments ; but he has not very much succeed in this job. For instance Vīra Sinha, who represents the Heroic sentiment, is lacking in appropriate strength and heroism; Prema latā has not the warmth and thrill of the Amorous.

But the playwright has shown good commonsense in his representing mutual friendship, jealousy or animosity between different characters. The

1. नवरस

marriage of the Heroic and the Amorous is in accordance with the canons of all lands and times. None but the brave deserves the fair. Again Prema Latā (the Amorous) has been appropriately made the sister of Līlā (the Humorous). Śāntā (the Quiet) is opposed to Rudra Sena (Terrible), and she disapproves of her brother's (Vīra Sinha's) acts of war. Prema Latā and Madhu (Affectionate) have a deep affection for each other; similarly Prema Latā is related to Karuṇā (the Pathetic), as in several cases love has to undergo a series of tribulations and its connection with pathos is therefore perennial. In the end the marriage of Vīra Sinha and Prem Lata through the efforts of Śāntā has a deep significance. In this event the author means to stress the need of the supremacy of Śāntā (quiet; restraint) over heroism and love.

'Navarasa' is an allegorical and, to a great extent, technical drama. It is both political and ethical in spirit, in which the eminent playwright has discussed one of the greatest problems of the world, i.e. war. The solution that he has offered is the one propounded by Gandhiji, that is, the establishment of peace through Ahimsa. Śāntā, in this play, is symbolic of Ahimsa, who succeeds in restoring peace and tying together Vīra Sinha (Heroic) and Prem Latā (Amorous) in the bond of marriage. Although there is no originality in the thoughts, yet Seth's ingenuity of thought and imagination is proved by his plan of presenting the War problem in a dramatic form. He has also infused sufficient force in most of his characters, and their speeches and actions.

'Nakshe Kā Ranga'[1] (1941) of Kumāra Hrdaya is another allegorical drama, in which the characters represent various emotions and instincts. It is a political allegory in which the author again deals with the principle of Ahimsa. Śānti[2] represents Ahimsa and the peace of the world. She is the daughter of दीनमेष, who seems to be our India in bonds of slavery. The author introduces दीनमेष in the following manner-

दीनमेष – विवश-पाश-राष्ट्र का अधिपति। आधुनिक युग के मानवीय कलुषित मनोभावों से मुक्त।

Karuṇā[3] is Dīnameṣa's companion in life and death, which means that the author looks upon Karuṇa as the permanent lot of slave India. Kalā[4] Kumāra is defined as संसार-संस्कृति का केन्द्र रूप. He is represented as an orphan, which means that the real and natural art which can bring peace and

1. नक्शे का रंग. 2. शान्ति 3. करुणा. 4. कला-कुमार.

joy to the world, is disregarded and neglected. Arāja-Ketu is an intoxicated barbarian, who is the leader of a Fascist nation. In his person, the author presents a protagonist of modern, artificial civilization, who apparently wants to make the backward nations (and countries like those of Dīnameṣa civilized, but who himself is really devoid of all human sense and compassion, and who is a heartless brute in gaining his own selfish ends. The author refers to Western supermacy and artificiality and pride in Arājaketu.

The play reflects the contemporary political condition of (slave) India and of the world in this play. Dīnameṣa, who is possessed of noble qualities, makes friends with अराजकेतु; he is unaware of the extremely selfish nature of अराजकेतु, but soon repents over his innocence and nobility, when अराजकेतु lays hands on his daughter (Śānti) and his kingdom. Śānti is the real Śānti (peace) of India whom Dīnameṣa describes in these words --

दीनमेष — (प्रफुल्ल मुख से परिपूर्ण होकर) आज से १६ वर्ष पूर्व मैंने तुझे हिमालय की गोद में खेलते हुए पाया था। वहां अचल नीरवता थी, अनन्त हिम-राशि थी और कण-कण में तू ही व्याप्त थी। वह दिव्यता - वह प्रसन्नता मैं कभी न भूल सकूंगा बेटी।

Śānti and Kalā-Kumāra are typically Indian in spirit. They are innocent and noble, yet very bold and unflinching in all miseries. They love to be what they are, and are not desirous of attaining to Western ideals and instincts. In Scene II, the ~~poet throws~~ author throws light on the system and policy of the United Nations' Organisation. He depicts this organisation as utterly useless and powerless, since the law of 'Might is right' rules even in its presence.

Dīnameṣa joins the hands of Śānti and Kalā-Kumāra but they are soon captured by Arajaketu's soldiers. Even in their enemy's custody, this typical Indian young couple sticks to its ideals. Śānti refuses to stoop to Arājaketu's sensual desire even for all his wealth, Kalā Kumāra refuses to get freedom by drawing just a picture of praise of his opponent. These two characters are symbols of Mahatma Gandhi's policy of Ahimsā and Satyāgraha, where the satyāgrahis remain calm and quiet, but bold and unswerving in their ideal, amidst all sufferings. The play ends in a tragedy and Kalā Kumāra, Dīnameṣa and Karuṇā lose their lives at the hands of Arājaketu who in his lust for power and possession, is ready to commit every inhuman act.

In the end, after doing all tyrannical acts, Arajaketu seems to be overpowered by his own conscience. He feels that his victory over all these persons and the large kingdom of Dinamesa is, in reality his defeat. He has not been able to bring these Indian characters under his control, and in his mind Dinamesa is still alive even after being hanged.

The allegory of the play is rather confused and is not very clear. There is not much action in the play, but the author, in lively and powerful dialogues, has carefully delineated the characters of Śānti, Kalākumāra, Dinamesa and Arājaketu. The play casts a sharp slur on the materialistic and blood-thirsty policy of the West and the sublime and spiritual civilization of the East.

There is another short, interesting allegorical play written by by the writer of this thesis himself. His 'Uṣā Kī Vijaya'[1] (1946) is an allegorical play, in which the author has depicted in a picturesque manner an imaginary struggle between Uṣā (Dawn) and Rajanī (Night). Sūrya Sinha personifies the Sun, Śaśi Kumār represents the Moon, and other characters represent the stars etc. In the absence of Uṣā (Dawn) the charming but innocent Queen Sandhyā (the young sister of Uṣā) is overpowered by the enemy. Consequently the kingdom of the sky goes temporarily to Night. But the regime of Night leads to lawlessness and abundance of crime, and the people get tired of the dark rule of the Night. While Night (रजनी) is celebrating her treacherous victory and she, with all her commanders and soldiers is lost in drinking and revelry, Uṣā and her Commander Sūrya Sinha (Sun) prepare for a fresh attack. They are very active and are inspired by nobler sentiments. They are secretly watching the horrible deeds that take place under Night's regime and want to liberate the mortal world from its oppression. So, early in the hours of Dawn, the army of Uṣā led by Sun attacks the careless and negligent enemy. The drunken enemy is taken by surprise; in a hard struggle, Night 's soldiers (stars etc.) at once take to their heels, while Moon takes some grips with the Sun; but being overpowered by the latter, he too retires from the battlefield.

The closing scene takes us to the luminated and shining court of Uṣā, which is nicely described. Everybody is jubilant over the victory. Soldiers are rewarded for their heroism in the recent battle, and Uṣā, who is already

1. उषा की विजय.

in love with the Sun, (who is also anxious for their union) gives her left hand to him. The theme of struggle between Night and Dawn has been made interesting by introducing the romantic love-plots of Rajanī (Night) and Śaśī (Moon) on the one side, and Megha (cloud) and Cañcalā (Lightning) on the other. The author has portrayed Dawn and Night in a very picturesque manner, and he also deserves credit for the entire originality of the theme, which is a result of his powerful imagination and keen sense of observation.

Chapter XXIII.

MISCELLANEOUS DRAMAS

In addition to different types of dramas that we have discussed in the foregoing chapters, there are certain other plays which refuse to accept this broad classication. They do not fall in any one of these categories, and each claims a separate class for itself. Although the number of such plays is not very large, still we shall refer only to a few dramas which are extremely beautiful as pieces of art and are a strong evidence of their authors' genius of creating new types.

One of the most beautiful drama of an independent category is 'Vikāsa' (1940) of Seth Govind Das. In the introduction the author writes ---

"...... विकास का फिल्म अवश्य बन सकता है, यद्यपि उसके लिये भी कुछ संवादों में परिवर्तन करना पड़ेगा। इन्हीं कारणों से मैंने इसका नाम 'नाटकीय-संवाद' रखा 'नाटक' या 'फोटो प्ले' नहीं।

'विकास' सन् १९३२ में मेरी दूसरी जेल यात्रा के समय नागपुर जेल में लिखा गया था। इसे लिखने में मुझे जितना समय लगा, उतना अपने किसी अन्य ग्रन्थ को लिखने में नहीं। गत आठ वर्षों में इसमें कई परिवर्तन भी हुए; फिर भी इसके इस समय के रूप और सन् १९३२ के रूप ~~और~~ में वर्तमान युद्ध का प्रसंग जोड़ देने के अतिरिक्त और कोई खास रदो-बदल नहीं हुआ।...

'Vikāsa' is a dream play, in which the author discusses two opposite views on the 'Vikāsa' (development) of this world. At night a lovely young couple discussed this very problem before going to sleep. In sleep that very conversation appeared before the youngman's eyes in dream. In dream the young man assumed the form of 'sky' (आकाश) and his young mate that of Earth (पृथ्वी). Both advocate contrary views: Prithvī believes that,

'सतत नियति से निश्चित इसका पतन और उत्थान।'

She means that the world is revolving like a wheel. It moves towards rise and decline as if placed on a wheel. On the other hand sky firmly believes that --

शैशव को अतिक्रान्त कर, चढ़ विकास सोपान,
ज्ञान उच्चतम शिखर को प्रकृति नित्य गतिमान;

He contradicts Prithvī's belief and contends that the world is perpetually going towards rise (उत्थान) in a collective sense. In his view constant development (उत्थान)without any decline (पतन) is the regular course of the world. In support of their respective convictions, both Sky and Earth make references to different epochs of the world-history. They allude to different events of the lives of Buddha, Christ and Aśoka etc., and both of them try to justify their statements from those events. According to them the decline (पतन) of the world means the increasing selfishness among the mortals, and the supremacy of the haughty and brutal tendencies in their minds. Its rise means just the opposite of this decline ; in a word rise means the Gandhian doctrine of non-violence, service and ~~service~~ sacrifice, while down-fall means violence, pride and selfishness. The discussion between Earth and Sky ends in smoke and no decision is arrived at. Both are firm in their respective beliefs and as they part with each other for their respective spheres, the youngman gets up from his sleep, awakens his wife and tells her that he presently saw a dream which he would like to narrate to her.

The author has raised the problem of the 'Vikāsa' of the world and has not given a definite reply to it. The debate ends in no decision which means that the distinguished playwright wants the reader to think out the definite reply for himself.

The play can be a splendid success on the screen, although in the active plot there is practically no action. Only a lengthy dialogues goes on between the Sky and the Earth, but in course of this very dialogue, very interesting, impressive and dramatic scenes have been introduced, and a lot of action is conducted in the dialogue. The scene-setting of the play is so very colourful, variegated and attractive that it can win a great applause on the screen. Moreover, in a single small drama events of different countries and times -- India, China and Rome, and Buddha, Asoka and Christ etc. have been introduced. This feature of the drama will have a special attraction for various types of spectators and readers. The significance of the play lies in its scene-setting and direction, and not in plot-development or characterisation. The playwright gives evidence of his power of a dramatist as also of a historian. His ingenious imagination enables him to depict scenes of glory and greatness of different times and

countries. The contradictory pictures of rise and decline add to the attraction of scene-setting by their mutual contrast.

This dream-play which is a type created by Seth Govind Das, betrays a strong influence of the cinema-technique on it. In cinema we often find that a dream-scene or scenes are depicted in this very manner for a few minutes. A person is shown sleeping, and then, all that passes through his mind, is shown on the screen. During these scenes of the descripiton of his dream, that person is frequently shown as sleeping and when the dream ends, that person is shown rising up. This very technique is used when a person is shown as recollecting his past reminiscences (e.g.'Parakh' directed by Sohrab Modi). Seth Govind Das has very beautifully depicted the opening ~~scen~~ a scene. As the dream of the youngman develops bit by bit, in the same order we find different scenes of sky, horizon, moonlight, mountains, trees, rivers temples and houses etc. coming before his (and our) eyes. In a very nice manner the dramatist depicts the descending sky and ascending earth, their union and their occasional fits of embracing and kissing each other. The scenes of kissing and embracing are in accordance with the cinema technique while they violate the classical traditions.

'Chaṭā Beṭā'[1] of Upendra Nath Ashka is also a dream-play. In this play the author has described in a very interesting manner the long wishful thinking of a human mind. In the introduction the author offers his explanation of the different charges and objections levelled against his plays, their technique and theme etc. After replying to various objections in a forceful manner, the author has expressed scholarly views on different problems of modern drama, e.g. the use of songs in plays, their adaptability to the stage etc. Speaking about 'Chata Beta' in particular, the author writes --

" जहां तक प्रस्तुत नाटक का सम्बन्ध है, इसके बारे में मैं कुछ नहीं कहूंगा। मैं केवल इतना ही विनय करूंगा कि मेरा यह छोटा सा नाटक दो वर्ष के सोच विचार, अध्ययन तथा परिश्रम का फल है। जो भी पंक्ति मैंने लिखी है, उसके लिये दलील है, कारण है। आलोचक सरसरी नज़र से पढ़कर मुझे कुछ सुझाने की कृपा करेंगे तो मैं अनुगृहीत हूंगा।

The opening scene of the play draws a very true and realistic picture of a lower middle-class house. The author has given a very lively, exact and accurate picture of the house, so much so that we can see the complete house actually before our eyes even from this word-description. Author's

1. छटा बेटा.

method of description and presentation is very nice --
"बरामदे में निस्तब्धता ऐसी है कि चटाई पर टिक टिक करते हुए चूहे की आवाज़ साफ़ सुनाई देती है। इस निस्तब्धता को हम उत्सुकता भरी निस्तब्धता कह सकते हैं। ऐसा मालूम होता है कि बरामदे के स्तम्भ हैं, मेज़, कुर्सियां, चारपाई यहां तक कि धूप भी कुछ सुनने के लिये उत्सुक है, दर्शकों की भी उत्सुकता मालूम होती है, गुस्से की हद को पहुंचा चाहते हैं। etc. etc.

The play abounds in descriptive stage-directions, long or short, which have been introduced at every step to express the inner feelings of a character's mind : e.g.

[चानन राम "तुम अभी बच्चे हो! तुम्हारी यह चंचलता क्षम्य है" कैसे भाव से संयत होते हैं] (Page 27)

(मुंह बनाता है, जैसे नाम ही से उसका चित्त मिलाने लगा है) (Page 4.)

Author's description of various characters is very minute and speaks of his keen observation -- e.g.

["आयु इस वर्ष से अधिक नहीं, लेकिन डाकखाने की बैठक ने उसे बत्तीस, पैंतीस का बना दिया है। चेहरे की दो चार रेखायें 'डिलिवरी', 'बुकिंग', 'सार्टिंग' की विरसता का पता देती हैं, जिन विभागों में वह क्रम से अब तक काम करता रहा है। मूंछें बढ़ी हुई हैं, इस लिये नहीं कि उसे बड़ी मूंछें पसन्द हैं, बल्कि इस लिये कि मूंछें कटवाने का समय नहीं मिला। हंस-मुख है किन्तु अब उसकी हंसी ऐसे ही बिखरती हुई प्रकट होती है जैसे शरद के बादल भरे आकाश में पीली श्वेत सी सूरज की मुस्कान।] (Page 34)

[शरद का वही सूर्य हंसता है।] (Page 36)

The plot of this dream-play is as follows. An aged man is badly addicted to drinking : at the same time he is not very well-to-do. His five sons, whom he gave education inspite of all his eccentric habits, now shirk the reponsibility of keeping their aged father with them. Each one of them wants the other to look after the father. The old man had a sixth son also. This youngest son, getting tired of his father's behaviour, ran away from him home and no one cared to trace him out.

The oldman is given a ten-rupee note and is asked to bring flour from the bazar, but he purchases wine and a lottery ticket for Rs. three lacs of rupees with that note, and returns home in a drunken condition. There he falls down on a cot, is buried in sleep, and there his dream begins. The dream which sums up the wishful thinking of the old man is highly interesting as well as instructive. In his dream the old man finds that his lottery ticket has actually brought him three lacs of rupees. Now a world of diff-

-erence takes place in the attitude and behaviour of all his sons and other relatives. His sons are thinking of ways and means of extracting all the money from their father. They now put up with the extremely objectionable behaviour of the same father, whose least slackness in ettiquette they strongly resented before. They flock round their father and serve him exactly in the manner in which a dog licks his master's feet, not out of affection, but out of greed of getting something from him to eat.

The old man, although he has been most maltreated by his sons in his days of penury, melts with this service of his sons. In a fit of drunken intoxication and inherent broadmindedness he distributes most of his wealth, (three lacks of rupees) amongst his sons, and wastes the rest in drinking and is left penniless again. Again their old mother prays her sons to look after their old father, who distributed all his wealth among them. But the sons are meanly selfish ; in vain does she beseech all the five sons, one after the other, to look after their father. When all the five selfish sons have refused and the old woman is despairing over their treatment, suddenly her sixth and forgotten son appears and offers himself for that job. He is glad to look after his old parents, who are in distress and have been betrayed by his five brothers.

The play deals with a real theme in a very realistic manner. It is a sharp reproach to those selfish sons, who are not hard to find in the world around us. The play is very interesting and speaks of the author's great powers of creation, and not only criticism (which he has himself admitted in the introduction) as a playwright and keen observer of human life.

Sudarśana 's Bhāgya Cakra' (or धूप छांह) is another drama which claims a separate class. It has achieved good success on the screen. It is a very interesting and well written drama which deals with the problem of sunshine and shade (i.e. happiness and misery) of human life. The author shows that the 'wheel of man 's Destiny' (Bhāgya Cakra) goes on revolving and with a single stroke of Destiny a man may change into quite a different type. A single event in the lives of Hira Lal, who is attached to the world, changes him into a recluse, and it changes Sūra Dāsa, who has renounced the world altogether, into a man tenderly attached to the world.

1- भाग्य - चक्र ·

Sudarśana is one of the best story-writers of today. He has displayed great skill in plot-construction and the climax is highly skilful and dramatic. Although the character of Sura Dasa is very interesting and original, yet some of the other characters, like Sham Lal, Durga Das etc. are no more than mere types. The play has been very successfully played on the screen.

'Kartavya'[1] of Seth Govind Das in another drama of a strange kind. Its style is entirely original and new to Hindi literature. The play deals with two sides of Duty (Kartavya) : the first negative and the second positive. The first part deals with Rama's story, showing how he carried out his duty. The second part narrates the principal events of Kṛṣṇa's life, and his way of attending to his duty. The aim of the lives of both Rama and Kṛṣṇa is the same, but their means and approach to that aim are different. Both of them aim at the welfare of the world, but while Rama sacrifices his life and happiness for his word (मर्यादा), Kṛṣṇa is not so scrupulous in these matters. He attends mainly to the consequence, and does not care much for the means that he employs for his end.

But when we go a little deep into the theme of this play, we find that the characters of Rama and Kṛṣṇa do not present a contrast. They are just two parts of one and the same whole ; Kṛṣṇa begins where Rama ends. Inspite of all his greatness, Rama is not free from feelings and emotions, while Kṛṣṇa's acts are motivated by a spirit of selflessness. In Kṛṣṇa we meet a more mature and restrained form of Ātmā, than in Rama, in whom the worldly element is more predominant than in Kṛṣṇa.

The playwright has displayed great skill and admirable power of selection in including all the chief events of the life of both the great heroes. At most of the places, the author has given reasonable explanations of the super-natural and super human deeds of Rama and Kṛṣṇa. Like most of his other dramas, 'Kartavya' also bears some reflections of author's own life. Author's own public-life (and even family life) and his path of Duty (Kartavya) have been paved with various difficulties and hardships. Inspired perhaps, by those very hardships the author describes how the path of Duty of these great personages is also beset with hardships. The play

1. कर्तव्य

seems to prepare the readers for the hardships that they may have to undergo in carrying out their duty.

Several playwrights emphasize the merits of their characters by drawing a contrast with some other characters. Others intensify the effect of their situations and events by inserting contradictory situations and events. But our playwright has drawn a contrast between the two parts of the play itself. This speaks of his power of imagination which has suggested to him this new type in which he has dealt with the lives of two great heroes with a view to placing before his readers the high responsibility and hardship of the path of Duty.

Chapter XXIV

Modern One-Act-Play

ONE - ACT - PLAY IN HINDI.

Although one-act-play was not unknown to Hindi literature before the modern period, still the Hindi one-act-play as it exists today is more an outcome of the influence of the West than of Sanskrit or Bengali literature. The technique of our present day one-act drama has been borrowed directly from the West, and Ibsen, Shaw, Galsworthy etc. have greatly influenced our modern one-act-playwrights. Alongside of bigger dramas, the one-act-plays have their continual record from the time of Bharatendu till today. But whereas our one-act-plays of the ninteenth century and the first quarter of present century had no independent technique or characteristics, and were written entirely or mostly under classical influence, our modern one-act-plays are a world different from their predecessors. Their technique is strictly based on Western formulas, and they have not been introduced into Hindi literature as a revised or improved form of their predecessor, but in open imitation of English and Russian one-act-plays. While one-act-playwrights like Dr. Rama Kumar Varma have infused Indian spirit and atmosphere in this Western technique, others like Bhuvaneśwara follow Western one-act-plays in all essentials.

For a few years in the beginning one-act-play was looked upon as an artificial form of literature having no genuine place in it. It was contended that this form of drama is simply a borrowing from the West, had nothing to do with Indian literature, and people expected its speedy decline. But this new form of literature has won immense popularity in a few years, and today one-act-plays are played much more frequently on the stage than full dramas. One-act-plays are all the more popular in amateur clubs and in Colleges and schools. The rise as well as the popularity of this form is mostly due to our present day life. While people in late-medieval times, and even in ancient times, had ample leisure to sit in a theatre for lengthy

performances, our life today is profusely full of struggles, conflicts and extremely busy hours. People want to have entertainment, but only for shorter hours. Few people who lead altogether workless lives may find sufficient time for reading or seeing longer plays. It is true that cinema shows — which take a long time to finish — are extremely popular today. But there we have to remember two things; firstly this lengthy form of entertainment is popular due to its recent rise in our country. Also, it mostly caters to the low, uncultured taste of the masses. Secondly, even this form is tending towards brevity. Only a few years ago, cinema shows used to last for three hours each ; but now most of the pictures take two and a half hours or even a little less. Moreover, if we eliminate those portions from the picture, which provide the audience with cheap entertainment, and substitute other finer portions instead, then a vast majority of the masses will feel this limit of two and a half hours even too long for them. What we mean to emphasize is, that if our modern masses have lost taste in bigger dramas, they equally dislike all other long-time performances if these latter do not cater to their low taste.

In the West the one-act-play developed into this form from the 'Curtain-Raisers', which used to be short pieces of entertainment shown to the audience before the commencement of bigger plays. Hindi one-act-play borrowed its technique, if not form, from this Western type, and flourished alongside of bigger drama as short-story in the presence of Novel and lyric and shorter poems along side of epic poems. So while the influence of the West on Hindi one-act-play — as also on short story, drama, novel, essay etc. cannot be denied or minimised, it is also idle to over-emphasize that influence.

Before we proceed to discuss our one-act-play of today, let us trace out its rise, its earliest form, and various stages of its development till today.

Act-Plays
[Sa]nskrit

In Sanskrit literature six of the ten varieties of Rupaka (viz. भाण, व्यायोग, प्रहसन, वीथी etc.) and some ten varieties of Uparupaka (viz. गोष्ठी, भाणिका, नाट्यरासक, काव्य etc.) had only one act each. The main factors of distinction of the types were their Vrttis (styles), Sandhis, the plot (whether historical or invented) and the hero or the heroine. They were

written under the hard and fast rules and definitions of the rhetoricians. For example, the definition of Bhāṇa is that " its subject-matter is invente by the poet ; a parasite sets forth his own or another's adventures, appeal -ing to both the heroic and the erotic sentiments by discipline of heroism and beauty in the verbal manner." Its Vṛtti is mostly Bhāratī, and it has 'Mukha'and 'Nirvahana' Sandhis. These various types of Sanskrit one-act-plays were merely illustrations of their different definitions or evidences of their author's skill. Otherwise they had no reflections of real life and its various problems and conflicts in them. A few one-act-plays of Sanskrit (e.g. Bhāsa's Uru-bhaṅga etc.) were nice compositions and had some affinity with our one-act-plays today.

...e of One-Act ...ay in Hindi.

Just as Hindi drama rightly begins with Bharatendu, so also the one-act-play rose with the same reputed writer. Bharatendu's 'Vaidikī Hiṁsā' 'Andhera Nagarī' etc. have one-act each. 'Prahlāda Carita' of Sri Niwasa Dasa is a one-act-play, and so also 'Śrī Dāmā Carita' and 'Satī Candrāvalī' of Radha Carana Goswami, 'Mādhurī' of कृष्णदेवशरणसिंह ; 'Kali Kautuka Rūpaka' of Pratapa Narayana Misra; 'Tīna Aitihāsika Rupaka' of Kashi Nath Khatri ; 'Jaya Nāra Siṁhakī' of Devaki Nandan Tripathi, 'Dukhinī Bālā' of Radha Kṛṣṇa dasa, beside several others. All these plays are mostly farces and have been discussed in earlier chapters. These one-act-plays have nothing in common with their present countertypes, and have been written mostly under classical influence, often with no standard technique.

This preliminary stage of Hindi one-act-play began with Bharatendu and lasted till 1929, the year when Prasada's 'Eka Ghunta'[1] appeared. In fact 'Eka Ghunta' is the first one-act-play of the modern type, in which the modern technique of one-act-play has been observed. Prasada has a considerable influence of classical drama, as a result of which the atmosphere of this play is somewhat classical, but the spirit of conflict in this play is certainly of the modern nature. Unities of place and time have been strictly observed. Other essential elements of one-act-play, like the psycho-analysis of characters etc. are also found here.

While the playwrights had so far no idea of a separate technique for the one-act-play, after Prasada's 'Eka Ghunta' they began to realise it and study it under the influence of the West. A tendency sweeped in

1. एक घूंट.

the minds of some of the playwrights to write one-act-plays in Hindi also on the lines of Western composition and consequently Shaw, Galsworthy and O' Neill etc. influenced our one-act-playwrights to a great extent. This external influence produced two type of one-act-playwrights in Hindi. Those of the first type borrowed the technique from the West, but introduced their own intellecturalism, their own atmosphere and plot in their works. Dr. Rama Kumar Varma is the protagonist of this class. To the second category belong those playwrights (e.g. Bhuvaneshwar) who borrowed not only the technique from the West, but also moulded their plot, their arguments, their psycho-analysis and atmosphere after Western designs. There were still some more one-act-playwrights (like Sudarshan, Candra Gupta Vidyalankar and others) who relied on their own imagination and power of invention for all the essentials of one-act-play, including technique.

By 1940 modern one-act-play had established itself in Hindi literature. After that further development took place in one-act-play, and several scholars began to raise new questions and objections on its technique under the influence of the West and after their own talents. New devices were invented and new experiments were made in this field. The great influence of the West which had been quickly accepted by the play-wrights in the opening years of one-act-play, now decreased and was assimilated to Indian atmosphere and effect. One-act-plays began to be more progressive and realistic and they began to strike at the various glaring evils of society and religion.

Today our one-act-play is getting still more realistic and progressive. The influence of Russian writers is dominating and their one-act plays are also being translated in Hindi. Topics of everyday occurrence and problems of common man's life are forming the theme of one-act-plays today. Problems of labourers, of wars and battles, of famine and bombardment, of capital and labour are frequently discussed in these plays. Most of the playwrights are so very realistic in their outlook that they have bidden farewell to all romance and colour in these plays.

Art and Technique of One-Act-Play.

Fundamentally one-act-play is a drama that has only one act. But its having only one act does not make a drama a good one-act-play. There are certain other characteristics which are essential or inevitable for a

good one act drama. The art of one-act-drama aims at describing some important and significant event of life in a short time, in a most beautiful and effective manner. The scope of this drama is very limited, and there is absolutely no room for unnecessary details or side-tracking. With its narrow bounds, a good one-act-play has the power to produce that effect which a longer play does with all its details and diversions. In a long play the first act is usually devoted to the setting up of atmosphere ; its plot develops bit by bit and it gradually gets condensed and marches slowly towards the climax. In a single-act drama all this process goes on with great speed, sometimes with electric speed, and with the same speed the few events of this drama drive towards the climax or, in its absence, towards the ending.

Unlike the longer play which embraces a large variety of plot and action, the subject-matter of a one-act-play is one picture, one phase of life; it essentially deals with one experience, a single tense situation, a single significant event, or a single strong reflection of an impassioned moment. The dramatist picks up one small, solitary but significant event of everyday life, and then concentrates all his art and skill on that very topic : he exhausts all his imagination and genius on that single event and tries to make it as impressive and dramatic as possible. It is due to its sharpness and poignancy that a one-act-play sometimes effects our mind more even than a full play.

Unity or concentration, which often leads to abruptness, is very essential for a one-act-drama. This abruptness produces a thrill in the climax. The presence of a climax is not altogether essential for a one-act play, although its presence may enhance its dramatic effect and charm. Still we can have very good one-act-plays even without the climax, and some scholars do not believe the climax to be at all essential for this type of drama. The unities of time, place and action are very useful for a one-act-play, and most of the writers observe some or all of these unities in their works. While good one-act-plays can be and have been, written without observing the unities of time and place, the unity of plot and effect is almost indispensable.

The plot of a one-act-play is based on, as we have already said, a

solitary but significant and vital event of life. The skill of the one-act-playwright lies in two things: firstly, in his foresight and sagaciousness in selecting a suitable topic for his pen ; and secondly, in infusing adequate force, cohesion, interest and effect in his work. The plot should develop in a natural, realistic but very careful and artistic manner, and no support of auxiliary or secondary plots or events should be looked for. The play-wright should proceed smoothly and straightly across his one selected topic. There should be regularity, life and sustained tension and curiosity in plot-development, and the curiosity and impatience of the reader or the spectator should grow with every movement that the plot may take further.

Not only there should be a sustained interest while the plot ascends towards the climax, there should be a similar force and flow in it as it descends and moves towards the ending. If the author does not aim at any climax in his play, then he should be all the more cautious in avoiding any looseness and lifelessness that may be resulted from the absence of climax.

The most effective, if not the only, instrument of a playwright--and equally well of a one-act-playwright-- is dialogue by means of which he develops his plot, delineates his characters and impresses upon the mind of the audience. In a short-story or a novel, the author has the room and choice to speak himself in addition to his characters. But this is not the option with the playwright. Conversation in a one-act-play should be very brief, concise and to the point. No words should be wasted ; the most select-ed, choicest and only significant and appropriate words and phrases should be used. The dialogue should be forceful, lively, interesting and effective. It should possess a sharpness and flow, and long undrmatic speeches which spoil the atmosphere and effect of the play should be strictly avoided. The use of soliloquies should be avoided as far as possible, and they should be used only where they are essential and do not appear unnatural.

The number of characters in a one-act-play should be very limited, and there too, only one or two characters should be predominant. No charact-ers should be introduced unnecessarily or only for the purpose of entertain-ment ; every character must have a distinct role to play in drama, and he should help in one way or the other in the development of the plot. The playwright should delineate some traits of the character of all dramatis

personae, while he should pay special attention to the leading characters. He should also display his skill in depicting the internal conflict in the minds of his chief characters, wherever possible. By means of psycho-analysis he should present a realistic picture of his characters ; but, while depicting the inner conflict, the playwright should not go too long lest it should disfigure the one-act-play. He should just give a shrp inkling into the minds of his characters, where two or more instincts are contending with each other.

Stage-directions which often tend to grow very long are another feature of the modern one-act-play. These are helpful in performing the drama on the stage. Nor only do these stage-directions often present a vivid picture of rooms, houses, scenery and persons, but some playwright make use of them in referring to the inner emotions of the minds of their characters. Upendra Nath Ashka in his 'Chaṭā Beṭa' has spoken the minds of his characters at several places through these stage-directions.

So we find that modern one-act-play is a separate form of literature with an entirely independent technique. It is quite different from one act of a bigger drama, which is not a self-dependent and self-complete unit in itself. Again, nor can one-act-play be called an abridgement, a brief form, of a longer play. It is not true that a one-act-play is just like a bigger play but for its size. As we have shown above one-act-play has several essential features and a technique which are greatly different from those of a longer play.

Some Leading One-Act-Playwrights

Dr. Ram Kumar Varma can be rightly called the father of modern Hindi one-act-play. Although Prasada's 'Eka Ghūnṭa' and 'Sajjan' were written before Varma stepped out in this field, still they are not altogether free from classical influence. Dr. Varma is certainly the first one-act-playwright who based his attempts on thoroughly Western technique.

Today there are some other one-act-playwrights also (like Seth Govind Das, Udaya Śankara Bhatta etc.) who have produced equally excellent dramas like Varma. But this cannot be denied that the lead was given in this field

by Varma. He is perhaps the only one-act-playwright who has stictly confined his genius to the sphere of one-act-play only, and has never tried his hand at longer plays. Being also on actor himself, the author always keeps the stage in view while writing these plays, and almost all his one-act-plays have been performed on the stage.

The basis of Varma's plays is mostly the social romance of every day life. He often deals with the problems of highly educated and aristocratic class of society. No doubt the author displays the innermost feelings of his character's minds, yet he gives a colour and charm to his representation. In one form or the other the atmosphere of artificiality, culture and etti-quette surrounds his works, which often dwell on the themes of love, suspicion, jealousy, hypocrisy, doubt and discontent. Although Dr. Varma deals with the every-day problems of life mostly in a realistic manner, yet an idealism often dominates the ending as we find, for instant in 'Parīkṣā'[1] or '18 July Kī Ek Shām'[2] etc. In these plays the playwright proceeds on natural and realistic lines, but the ending appears to have been intentionally moulded towards idealism.

Varma has written a large quantity of plays, which do not lag behind in quality also. His earlier attempts, which have been collected in 'Pṛthvīrāja Kī Ānkhen'[3] show some signs of infancy, but his art has certainly matured in his later compositions (collected in 'Reśmī Tie'[4], Cārumitrā[5] etc.). While the author has adopted Western technique in his works, he has infused Indian atmosphere, intellectualism and plot in them. The curiosity of the audience is retained till the end, and sometimes the suspense is so strong that the audience gets impatient to know the consequence. Varma firmly believes in the utility of the climax in a one-act-play, and in all his attempts he has developed the plot gradually, step by step, and has led it to the climax. After the climax, the drama sometimes loses its force and flow, but the author often tries to close it soon after the climax.

Varma's plays do not accept the unities of time and place. The author has written social as well as historical dramas, and in writing these he gives a long rope to his imagination, and often embraces a wide sphere. He has excelled in depicting the internal conflict in his characters' mind, and

1. परीक्षा 2. १८ जुलाई की एक शाम 3. पृथ्वीराज की आँखें 4. रेशमी टाई 5. चारुमित्रा

his psycho-analysis of his characters is very forceful though brief due to the scarity of space. He draws very clear and bold sketches of his character in a few words, and sometimes makes use of satire also for this purpose. He possesses a complete control over the language, namely, pure Hindi, Hindustani with mixed Hindi and Urdu, or affected Hindi put in the mouth of non-Hindi characters.

'Parīkṣā' is one of the best attempts of Dr. Varma. It is a psychological test of the firm ideals of a Hindu wife. As our present day high-class ladies live in an atmosphere of artificiality and false ettiquete, and are deeply influenced by Western education and culture, it is feared lest their firmness of ideal character should have been shaken under this influence. The author has examined such an educated wife -- Ratnā -- in a pschological method in this play, and she succeeds in this test. While this success idealizes Ratna 's character, we fear that this is not the realistic representation of the mind of a Westernised Indian women. The author has depicted the idealistic and not the realistic picture of modern educated Indian woman, and we strongly doubt if all highly educated and westernised young girls of India are so firm in character.

The author has nicely depicted the character of Ratnā, which is a study of her conflicting emotions. Dr. Rudra and Professor Kedar also have some individual characteristics and the author has introduced a little of humour too. The protracted pathos, pessimism and suspense that prevails in the drama ends in light humour and thus removes the burden of the play.

Pt. Udaya Śankara Bhatta has written several one-act-plays besides a number of longer plays, which have been discussed in earlier chapters. As in his lyrical dramas, so also in his one-act-plays Bhatta has achieved greater success than in his long plays like 'Dāhara'. His plays have often a tragic ending and he makes use of the psycho-analytical style in a graceful manner. Bhatta does not always base his plays on climax ; but the absence of climax or curiosity does not make his plays lifeless or dull. His depiction of the inner strife in his characters generally makes his plays interesting and attractive. His dialogues are generally forceful, natural and lively, and his language goes on explaining the ideas andemotions of his characters in a simple yet effective manner.

'Dasa Hazāra'[1] is one of the beautiful dramas of Bhatta. In this play the author depicts the conflict in the mind of the hero (Viśākhā Rāma) between two emotions. His love of money strikes against his affection for his son, and in the end his greed for wealth overpowers filial affection. In representing this victory of Mammon over affection, Bhatta has been very realistic and true. Influence of idealism might have declared the victory of affection over greed, but Bhatta realistic in his point of view as he here is fully knows that such Shylocks are not wanting in our society who would sacrfice their son and even their wife for money.

Seth Govind Das is not great only in his longer plays, but he deserves a very high position among one-act-playwrights too. Numerous collections of his one-act-plays (e.g. 'Sapta Raśmi[2] ; Pañca Bhūta[3] ; Ekādaśī[4]) have been published. In his one-act-plays, as in his bigger plays, Seth usually deals with the problems of aristocracy ; these problems are often influenced by or intermixed with the doctrines of Gandhi's philosophy. A close study of his one-act-plays discloses the fact that the author has not written them in order to display his art of one-act-playwriting. It seems that he wants to make the one-act-play an instrument for expressing and analysing some of the doctrines and convictions of his mind.

In his one-act-plays (as in his bigger plays too) Seth usually deals with some social problem, or hints at some special tendency of contemporary society. Owing to the predominance of problem and doctrines (or principles) there is usually a lack of curiosity and climax in his plays. Mental conflict in the characters is also nicely depicted in several plays. Seth is very careful in his selection of characters, whose number is never large in his one-act-plays. His plays disclose a great influence of Western writers, but he has achieved great success in realistic delineation of his characters. Like Dr. Varma he uses dialogue in a very appropriate manner, and has full mastery over language, which is usually simple and natural.

We can take Seth's 'Mānava Mana'[5] for critical appreciation. In this play the author has brought two different instincts of human mind into conflict. Basic instincts of man's mind clash against strong impulse of idealism. A powerful struggle goes on between the two instincts for sometime, and in the end the natural basic instinct overpowers the impulse of idealism.

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1. दस हजार. 2. सप्तरश्मि. 3. पञ्चभूत. 4. एकादशी. 5. मानव-मन.

Realism conquers idealism, because the basic instinct is the real, natural and spontaneous instinct of human mind, while ideal emotions are unnatural and have been forcibly imposed on the mind by external agencies of society.

In addition to regular one-act-plays Seth has written several monodramas also, where only one character speak. Although Bharatendu's Viṣasya Viṣam Auṣadham is also a monodrama, still the credit of introducing modern types of monodramas goes to Seth. His monodramas are not sililoquies like Bharatendu's 'Viṣasya Viṣam Auṣadham'. In these dramas the chief character does not speak to himself, but he addresses something or some one (it may be a pen, horse, or some other character who does not respond in words but makes appropriate gestures and movements) or sometimes reads out passages from his note-book. Some of Seth's monodramas are very beautiful and 'Shāp Yā Var'[1] is one of these excellent monodramas. It is a play divided in two parts, and portrays two opposite pictures of Indian home-life. The first is of a discontented and disturbed rich family, and the second of a contented poor couple. There are two characters in each of these plays; woman goes on speaking in an emotional fit, while man goes on listening quietly without making any response. The playwright has excelled in psycho-analysis and in presenting the contrast in this play.

Upendra Nath Ashka has also written some beautiful one-act-plays. His 'Adhikāra Kā Rakṣaka'[2], 'Lakṣmī Kā Swāgata'[3] and 'Pāpī'[4] are excellent one-act-plays. He has written his plays especially for the stage, and his representation of characters is very realistic and true to life. We have expressed our thoughts on Ashka while dealing with his 'Chaṭā Beṭā', (Chapter XXIII). In his plays, the plot generally develops step by step, and does not shoot forth like an arrow. Ashka deals with social problems in a very forceful, impressive and sometimes pathetic manner. Occasionally, he also depicts the internal strife in his character's mind in a realistic manner. His bitter experiments of personal life have imparted poignancy and sharpness to his style and expression.

Ashka has made occasional use of humour and frequent use of satire in his plays. But in his satire there is no hatred or contempt, and nor pride or conceit in his humour. Only in some cases of personal experience

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1. शाप या वर, 2 अधिकार का रक्षक, 3 लक्ष्मी का स्वागत, 4. पापी.

a bitterness and sharpirony has penetrated his satire (e.g. 'Laksmī Kā-swāgata). In 'Adhikāra Kā Raksaka', Ashka has disclosed the hypocrisy of public men, who proclaim to reform various aspects of society, but whose behavious is just the opposite in their private life. A man who promises to safeguard the rights (Adhikāra) of different societies and classes of people in order to get their votes in election, violates those very rights in his private life.

In this play the author nicely depicts the conflict between the private and public lives of Mr. Seth. Mr. Seth is very affectionate towards children in his public life, but, at home, treats his own son in a very inhuman way. In the assembly he wants to fight for the rights of servants and employees, but maltreats his own servants at home. In every work he acts hypocritically and falsely. In fact the private side of Mr. Seth's character is the real side of his character, while its public side is full of hypocrisy and is a posed one.

Bhuvaneśvara Prasāda is one of those leading playwrights who have drawn much from the West. Bhuvaneśvara's technique, his ideas and emotions bear strong reflections of Western playwrights, of Shaw in particular. Almost all his one-act-plays have been written under the influence of Western playwrights and the author has himself admitted this fact on more occasions than one. In the introduction of his 'Caravan' he admits --

(लिखने के बाद मुझे प्रतीत हुआ कि मेरे 'शैतान' के एक सीन मे 'शॉ' की छाया तनिक अधिक मुखर हो गई है। मैं इसे निर्विवाद स्वीकार करता हूं।)

While Bhuvaneśvara's 'Śyāmā'[1] is practically a translation of Bernard Shaw's 'Candida', his 'Śaitāna'[2] is no less influenced by Shaw's 'Devil's Disciple'. At certain places the author has verily forgotten, in his zeal to imitate Western writers, that he is an Indian, is representing Indian life in his one-act-plays and that his plays are meant for Indian people. If we substitute English names for his Indian characters, his plays can bear true and realistic expression of English life. The problems of most of his plays are those of love and the institution of marriage. In these plays he has depicted a particular class of society, which is extremely westernised in its life and manners. These problems of love and marriage are more social problems than sex-problems, because in these plays the author does not dwell so much on the inner or psychological working of sexual instincts, as on the

1. श्यामा. 2. शैतन.

external and social side of this problem. In this game of free-love and seduction, the illicit lovers are not those classical ideal lovers who are prepared to sacrifice everything for their beloved. Rather they are business-like even in this matter; they are mad in love so long as the path of love seems smooth and thornless. But as soon as they find it paved with grave dangers and dire difficulties, their madness is cooled down. In their love they are seldom ready to run great risks. This tendency of his characters again betryas a Western impression.

The bitter experiences and hardships of Bhuvanesvara's life have made him a cynic. He has no firm faith in anything, and the cause of this suspicion is jealousy and not renunciation. His outlook on life is not of disinclimation or contempt; it is of satire and heart-burning due to personal failures to achieve certain ends. Bhuvanesvara does not believe in the solution of problems, because in his opinion the solution of one problem will give rise to several problems. His personality resembles that of a rejected or disappointed lover who begins to hate the entire woman-kind. This disappointment has given an acuteness, a sharpness to his force of negation.

Although the author looks upon sentimentalism as strictly prohibited for a one-act-playwright, still he himself has been sentimental and poetic at so many places. In technique he has been very successful, and abruptness is the main feature of his technique. The author sustains the curiosity of his readers and there is abruptness even in his climax. In his 'Strike' as well as 'Romance! Romance!' the characters are shrouded in mystery till the end. The author has also succeeded in presenting pathetic atmosphere at certain places in a very careful manner. Bhuvanesvara's 'Ūsara' too is a beautiful one-act-play. His stage-directions are also very significant and helpful in understanding the situations and characters.

Ganeśa Prasāda Dvivedī has also contributed a lot to Hindi one-act-drama. He is an aesthete, and he aims at the creation of something beautiful and artistic in his plays. He does not write essentially for the purpose of their being successfully represented on the stage. He writes dramas just for a clear and forceful pscho-analysis of human mind. The common theme of his plays is the mutual attraction of the two sexes. But the conflict in these plays is not between the character and society, but between the contending emotions of the mind of one and the same character. In short, Dvivedi's pro-

प्रेमांस: रोमांच: २: ऊसर

blem of sex is strictly a pachological problem and not the social problem which we find in most of the play of Bhuvanesvara.

The author treats love as a permanent, deep and subtle instinct of human mind but he has introduced realism in his treatment of love. In his realistic characterisation while a woman has an impulse of acute longing, sexual hunger and self-surrender, she has also strong emotions of jealousy, revenge and reciprocity. In the same way his man has forbearance, but also suspicion, contempt and egoism. In his 'Suhāga Bindī',[1] 'Dūsarā Upāya Hī Kyā Thā'[2] and 'Sarvasva Samarpana'[3] the author has nicely analysed woman's mind, and in 'Vaha Phira Āyī Thī',[4] 'Parde Kā Apara Pārśva'[5] and 'Śarmā Jī'[6] etc. he has analysed man's mind, while in his 'Comrade' he has compared both. His 'Suhāga Bindī' and 'Comrade' are excellent plays.

Characterisation is the significant feature of his plays; in characterisation the author depends solely or mostly on psycho-analysis of his characters and not on the events. In his plot, therefore, there is often a great paucity of events, while it possesses the unique force of psycho-analysis.

Having dealt with these great one-act-playwrights, whose contributions to this branch of literature are great in quantity as well as quality, we shall now refer to some other playwrights who has contributed a little to this side. Of these, Becana Śarmā 'Ugra' and Bhavatī[9a] Carana Varmā are talented playwrights who have written excellent one-act-plays, but the number of their one-act-plays is not very large. Ugra is one of the earliest modern one-act-playwrights. He has written only a few one-act-plays, like 'Afzal Vadh'[7] 'Ujabak',[8] 'Cāra Becāre'[9] 'Bhāī Miān'[10] etc. His genius has great originality and force, and his style is very impressive. He tackles serious and subtle problems in a very light, humorous way. His language is very swift and idiomatic, and there is boldness and force in his dialogue. Ugra believes in introducing full life and vigour in literature, but in his works this force is more of language than of mental feelings and intellectual or spiritual convictions. Ugra is one of the earliest playwrights who revolted against the orthodox orders of society.

Bhagavatī Carana Varma is a successful and celebrated novelist, story writer and poet. Of his few one-act-plays, 'Main Aur[11] Kewal Main' and 'Sab

1. सुहाग-बिन्दी. 2. दूसरा उपाय ही क्या था. 3. सर्वस्व समर्पण. 4. वह फिर आई थी. 5. पर्दे का अपर पार्श्व. 6. शर्मा जी. 7. अफ़ज़ल-वध. 8. उजबक. 9. चार बेचारे. 10. भाई मियां. 11. मैं और केवल मैं

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Having dealt with these great one-act-playwrights, whose contributions to this branch of literature are great in quantity as well as quality, we shall now refer to some other playwrights who has contributed a little to this side. Of these, Pāṇḍey Becan Śarmā 'Ugra' and Bhagvati Charan Varma are talented playwrights who have written excellent one-act-plays, but the number of their one-act-plays is not very large. Ugra is one of the earliest modern one-act-playwrights. He has written only a few one-act-plays, like 'Afzal Vadh'[7] 'Ujbak'[8], 'Cāra Becāre'[9] 'Ḍiṅg Mīṅg'[10] etc. His genius has great originality and force, and his style is very impressive. He handles serious and subtle problems in a very light, humorous way. His language is very swift and idiomatic, and there is boldness and force in his dialogue. Ugra believes in introducing full life and vigour in literature, but in his works this force is more of language than of mental feelings and impulsiveness or spiritual convictions. Ugra is one of the earliest playwrights who revolted against the orthodox customs of society.

Bhagvati Charan Varma is a renowned and celebrated novelist, story writer and poet. Of his few one-act-plays, 'Sabse Baḍā Ādmī'[11] and '

-se Bara Ādmī'[1] are outstanding. In both these plays Varma refers to the bitter realism of life and has drawn a very picturesque conflict between realism and idealism. In 'Main Aur Kewal Main' the author draws the picture of this selfish world, where everybody wants to prosper at the cost of others. The idealistic feelings of selfless sacrifice and sympathy of Rameśvara clash with some heartless selfish persons who represent the true picture of this world. In the end Rameśvara gets disappointed with his idealistic behaviour, comes down to realistic level and pays back the tyrants in their own coin. In this way the author tries to prove that this selfish world is no place for ideal feelings and behaviour, which are bound to meet a failure here. Varma's language is idiomatic and regular, and his dialogue becomes poetic at several places.

Sadguru Śarana Avasthī[2] has also written a large number of one-act-plays, which have appeared in several collections (e.g. Mudrikā[3]; Do Ekānkī[4]) besides journals. He has a definite view point on one-act-play which he has explained in his introduction to 'Do Ekānkī'. He does not maintain that plays are meant essentially for the stage. Dramas are not meant solely for entertainment: there should be a air of intellectualism and a beauty of literary art in them. Accordingly Avasthi's one-act-plays are written with this very point of view. They do not follow the dramatic technique very closely, and the conflict, regularity and compactness which are the life-force of a one-act-play are comparatively lacking in his works. His dialogue often begin to stagger on account of very serious arguments and discussions. He does not try to make his dialogues interesting, lively and impressive; rather he makes use of them for propounding different doctrines and for thoroughly discussing one topic or the other. He does not make his sentence significant, concise and to the point, which is so essential in a one-act-play. Nor is his language simple and natural: it is often artificial, forced and very hard, even sometimes laden with various figures of speech.

Śambhu Dyāl Saxena[5] is another writer, who has lately entered the field of one-act-play. He has published 'Valkal'[6], which is a collection of four short dramas, besides other plays scattered in different monthlies. He often picks up popular stories for his themes. All the four plays of his 'Valkal' (namely, 'Valkal', 'Praharī', 'Ātithya', and 'Sone Kī Mūrti') deal

1. सबसे बड़ा आदमी 2. सद्गुरु शरण अवस्थी 3. मुद्रिका 4. दो एकांकी 5. शम्भूदयाल सक्सेना 6. वल्कल

[illegible] चिता की धधकती हुई लपटें भी शीतल पड़ जायेंगी।

with different events of Rama's life. The author has infused new life and has given fresh colour to these epic characters. He has no rising emotions, no sentiments and no problems in his plays, nor has he produced anyother extraordinary merit in his enterprise.

In addition to these one-act-playwrights, there are many others -- mostly new entrants on this stage -- who have written a few plays. They are budding playwrights, and some of them have written really good plays. Of these, Kamala Kant Varma's 'Sūryodaya'[1], Śrī Visnu's 'Mān Bāp'[2], Avinash Candra's 'Rāh Ke Kānte'[3], Dharma Prakash Anand's 'Dīnū'[4] and 'Sitamgar'[5] and our 'Usā Kī Vijaya'[6] (discussed in Chapter XXII and 'Abhiśāpa'[7] (discussed below) deserve a mention.

In 'Abhiśāpa' the author has discussed as to which of poverty and excessive wealth is a curse. The play begins with a romantic description of the bungalow of a millionaire, which is situated in Kashmir in lovely surroundings. A few hints have also been given of the most luxurious and extravagant life that these rich people lead. The effect of this description is enhanced by drawing a very lively and powerful contrast between the extremely poor and starving condition of the old man on one hand and the extremely haughty and rich life of Usā and Aruna on the other. The irony of the fate is that the old man turns out to be their long-lost father.

There is vanity and callousness in the speeches of Aruna, while the words of the old man are dripping with pathos, misery and suffering. Here we find that money is really a curse, since it makes a noble man simply hearthless and bestial in his treatment of others : as the old man says ---

वृद्ध — "परमात्मा, तूने अमीर बनाये ही क्यों! क्या नीरस गरीबों का दिल दुखाने के लिये, उनका खून चूसने के लिये, उन पर हन्टर बरसाने के लिये। धन ये धन के मालिक होते, न कोई इनके पास आशा करके आता। वे धन से खेलते हैं, गरीबों के आंसुओं से भीगी भावनाओं को पाओं तले रौंदते हैं। प्रभो, एक बार इनको भी अकिंचन बना दो, फिर इनको निर्धनों के दिल का हाल मालूम हो जाये।"

Again the terrible lot of a poor man is described in pathetic words---

वृद्ध — "इतना बड़ा शरीर चूल्हे में कैसे आ सकता है, बाबू जी! ग़रीबों को जलाने के लिये अमीरों का क्रोध और उनकी घुड़कियां ही काफी हैं। आग उनको क्या जलायेगी। उनकी भयानक विपत्तियों को देखकर चिता की आग का दिल भी दहल जायेगा। उनकी जलती हुई

1. सूर्योदय, 2. मां बाप, 3. राह के कांटे, 4. दीनू, 5. सितमगर, 6. उषा की विजय, 7. अभिशाप.

आहों के आगे चिता की धधकती हुई लपटें भी शीतल पड़ जायेंगी।

Aruna can spend forty rupees for the treatment of his puppy ; he can waste lot of money on entertainment and can afford to give even twenty thousand rupees in dowry to his sister, but he refuses to give a single rupee to a poor man. The play ends with the climax when the old man falls down from the stairs of Aruna's Kothi and dies ; Usa comes out to look at the old man, but is horrified to read her own father's name imprinted on the fore-arm of the oldman. A few minutes earlier, she and her brother (Aruna) were talking affectionately of their long-lost father whom they wished to see again even at the cost of all their wealth. And that very old father met his tragic end at the hands of his son and daughter, who were drunken with the wine of wealth. The play also sounds a strong note against the system of heavy dowry, which is prevalent in upper classes. It has been staged several times in different colleges of East Punjab under the direction of the playwright himself.

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ter XXV.

TECHNIQUE OF MODERN HINDI DRAMA.

The technique of the ninteenth century drama had been fashioned under two main influences, viz. the classical and the Western. Some of the plays betray considerable influence of medieval drama also. In the modern drama we find no trace of the medieval influence. The classical influence which was predominant in the ninteenth century gradually diminished with the times, and in modern drama we find only a little conformity to classical canons. Western influence, on the other hand, swiftly overpowered Hindi drama, which at present, conforms much more to Western technique than to classical canons. At the same time the latest Hindi drama bears also a clear impression of the screen. Hindi playwrights of today keep the screen and not the stage in view while writing their dramas. They include all such scenes which can not be shown on the stage, but which are quire convenient for the screen. In his preface to 'Aśoka', Candragupta Vidyalankara writes:

'यहां मैं सिर्फ़ एक ही निवेदन करना चाहता हूं। पहले नाटक प्रायः रंगमंच पर खेलने के लिये लिखे जाया करते थे। परन्तु अब रंगमंच का स्थान चलचित्रों ने ले लिया है। इस लिये नाटक में मैंने अनेक दृश्य ऐसे रक्खे हैं, जिन्हें रंगमच पर तो आसानी से नहीं खेला जा सकता है, परन्तु इसका चित्र बनाने में कोई कठिनाई न होगी।'

The tendency towards a greater number of shorter scenes and the mobility of the modern play can be attributed greatly to the reaction of the film upon the theatre. Under the Western influence, five-act-plays became the fashion of the day; now the popular number is reduced to three, and it is no wonder that, as we have only one interval in Indian pictures, Hindi drama may also begin to have only one interval, i.e. only two acts. Or, taking it still further, the influence of English pictures which have no interval at all, may lead to the practice of keeping only one long act in a drama. As in the films we have the latter half comparatively shorter than the first half, so our Hindi playwrights are also developing a practice of making

their succeeding acts shorter than the preceding ones. For instance, in 'Muktipatha' of Udaya Śankara Bhatta, the first act covers more than 48 pages, the second hardly 32, and the last act consists only of 16 pages. In the same way, in 'Dhruva-svāminī' of Prasada, the first act consits of 24 pages, the second of 15 and the last act of 14 pages only. In this way we find that the influence of cinema is noticeable in Hindi drama along with that of the Western technique.

According to the rules of classical dramaturgy, every play should usually begin with the 'Nāndī' or the 'Benedictory verse'. Ancient Indian mind believed in the sanctity and strength of Dharma, and so in the Nāndī the poet invoked the blessings of some popular deity. In the ninteenth century the Nāndī was retained in certain dramas, while it was eliminated from others under the influence of Western literature and culture. But the playwrights of today have totally banished the Nāndī from their works, as also the Bharata-Vākya.

The Nāndī was followed by the Prastāvanā, and the latter was more significant than the former. The playwright introduced himself to the audience by means of the Prastāvanā, and also made a reference to the plot in it. Modern Hindi drama has dispensed with this practice altogether. Consequently, one of the puzzles of our theatre is the comparative obscurity of the author as far as the general public is concerned, as the plays make no reference to the playwright's person. In case the playwright wishes to introduce himself to the audience, he has to make his bow to them on the stage on one occasion or the other. Again the chief aim of drama, in the modern period, having shifted from sentiment to story-interest, the Prastāvanā is rendered useless. In modern drama the development of the plot takes place in such a manner that the interest of the audience is maintained till the end, and the spectators are anxious to know as to 'what next'. Hence the Prastāvanā is deleted in imitation of Western drama, and partly due to changed essentials of modern drama.

Another important feature of our modern drama are the long prefaces, introductions or forewords which are attached to most of the modern plays. This tendency is again an imitation of the West where, in case of certain playwrights (like G.B. Shaw), their prefaces are considered more important

than their plays. Some of the playwrights seek to offer their defence in these prefaces (e.g. Śaśigupta of Seth Govind Das 'Chaṭā Beṭā' of Ashka; others indulge in lengthy discussions on the plot (e.g. Prasada's historical plays), while yet others come forward to deliver a sermon and preach some doctrine to the audience (e.g. Udaya Śankara Bhatta's 'Muktipata', where the author delivers a long lecture under the following head ('अंधानुकरण मत करो। सोचो और प्रयोग करो। इसी में जीवन की सार्थकता है।') These prefaces are often very lengthy, in certain cases running over to twenty pages and more.

The classical dramas were not sub-divided into scenes as they aimed at the keeping up of a particular sentiment. But today quick transfer of scenes is very helpful and even necessary for the variety and interest of the plot. Accordingly, most of our modern playwrights divide their acts into scenes (e.g. Prasada, Candragupta Vidyalankara, Udaya Śankara Bhatta etc.). In his Rājyaśrī, Prasada has divided acts into scene, but has named them not as 'Scene I', 'Scene II' etc. but simply as 'I' 'II' etc. But the latest practice with our playwrights is again not to subdivide their acts into scenes. Jaya Śankara Prasada did not divide the acts of his last play 'Dhruva Svāminī' into scenes. This tendency of dividing the play only into acts and not further into scenes is very popular in problem plays of Seth Govind Das and Pt. Laksmi Narayana Misra. Seth's 'Tyāga Yā Grahana', 'Mahatva Kise' 'Santosa Kahān' etc and Misra's 'Rāja Yoga' etc. have no sub-divisions into scenes. This is a revival of the classical tendency, although the story-interest is maintained more than sentiment, and scenes go on changing within the acts without being named separately.

Classical dramas could have five to ten acts, their usual number being seven. In modern times, when every act can be and often is sub-divided into scenes, and there being no limit to such scenes, the number of acts has considerably reduced. Until recently the usual number of acts in a play was five. But today the playwrights are tempted to divide their works into three acts only (e.g. Seth Govind Das's 'Sneha Yā Svarga', 'Sevā Path' etc. L. N. Misra's 'Rāja Yoga' 'Sindūra Kī Holī' etc., Udaya Śankara Bhatta's 'Muktipatha', Hari Kṛṣṇa Premī's 'Āhuti', 'Svapna-Bhanga', 'Pratiśodha', 'Rakṣā-Bandhan', Prithvi Nath Śarmā's 'Aparādhi', Prasada's 'Dhruva-Svāminī' etc.)

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perhaps because they intend to minimise the number of 'intervals' in their plays. If this tendency of reducing the number of interval goes on, we may, in the near future, have plays with two acts only, or even with one long act.

Dividing the plays into three acts has a scientific background also. The dramatic plot consists mainly of three parts, and one act is devoted to each of these parts. In this way the playwright lays down the foundation of the plot, builds up the atmosphere and starts the conflict of the story in the first act. The further development of the plot, the crisis and the turning point are placed in the second act, while the climax and the ending remain for the third. But some lesser playwrights do not understand the significance of this act-division, and they divide their plot haphazardly into three, four or more acts.

Next we come to dialogue, which is perhaps the most significant part of drama. Dialogue is the most effective instrument for plot-development and character-painting. Of the different types of conversation we take up the soliloquy first. For emotional, philosophical and complex characters, the use of soliloquy is indispensable. In case of such characters, the elimination of soliloquies may make it very difficult to understand their character, and may spoil ~~of~~ the charm of the plot. If Hamlet's soliloquies, for instance, are banished from Shakespeare's 'Hamlet', the proper understanding of prince's character will be impossible. Similarly, in 'Ajātaśatru', King Bimbasara is another complex character, who gives vent to his emotions only through soliloquies. In the same way the long soliloquy of prince Siddharth on the eve of his leaving his palace for good ('Muktipatha' Act II Scene IV) is so essential for understanding the proper working of his mind, and the fierce battle of contending emotions that goes on in his heart.

The realistic playwrights of the West (and in their imitation those of our country also) are out to banish soliloquy from drama as unreal and unnatural. They contend that in real life no characters speak to themselves all alone, and if they speak at all, they speak not more than a few words or one or two sentences to themselves. This is all right. But we have also to remember that there are hardly any characters who do not think and reflect in their mind in solitude. Everybody, small or great, man or woman --- so long he is possessed of his mind and his mind has its natural power of think

ing --- does think to himself on several occasions in various situations. This being so, if any playwright wants to place the feelings or reflections of a particular character before the audience with a view to properly portray-ing his character, he has no other instrument but the soliloquy. It is true that if and when the feelings of a particular character mature into the form of fruit, then those feelings can be understood from that fruit even without resorting to soliloquy. But in so many cases and on so many occasion the thoughts of a man do not mature into fruit ; on others they take an adverse turn. In such cases, soliloquy remains an effective and essential weapon in the hands of the playwright for appropriately portraying his characters.

Consequently we find that although there is much cry against the soliloquy in the West, and our realistic playwrights have tried to join in that cry to some extent, our dramatists in general have not banished the soliloquy from their plays. Soliloquies, short or long, are quite abundant in the works of almost all the modern playwrights: in most of the cases acts and scenes verily begin with soliloquies.

Helpful and essential as the soliloquy is for character-painting, its use must, at the same time, be very careful and restricted. It should always be the last resort of a playwright, and he should make use of it only when he finds that no other device can work. Most of the playwrights of the ninteenth century, including Bharatendu have made free use of soliloquy at their own free will. On several occasions they put long soliloquies in the mouths of their characters, when open dialogue between two or more characters would have been more effective. Most of the playwrights of the first quarter of the twentieth century are no less guilty of this fault. But the play-wrights of the modern period, for the most part, are very careful in their use of soliloquy. Udaya Shankar Bhatta, for instance, could have freely indulged in soliloquies in his 'Muktipatha' in order to properly portray the philosophic and reflective character of Siddhartha. But he has very cleverly delineated the deeply reflective character of Siddhartha by means of lively, interesting dialogue. It is only in one scene (where Siddhartha bids fare-well to his princely palace and pleasures) that he puts soliloquy in Siddhar-tha's mouth, it being indispensable there.

Less useful but more unnatural and even ridiculous is the 'aside', which was often used in Hindi drama in the ninteenth century. The 'aside' is quite common in Sanskrit drama ; but there it did not sound so unnatural, as the classical plays being mostly staged in royal courts, the audience was not very large. In the present-day theatre where the audiences are often very large, the 'aside' has to be spoken by the actor at the top of his voice. And it is the height of unnaturalness that the last man in the audience sitting at a great distance from the actor should clearly hear his words, while other characters on the stage should stand by him like deaf persons. Therefore, under the influence of the West, our playwrights of today have dispensed with the 'aside', and it is very seldom that we may come across any 'aside' in their plays.

But unnatural as the 'aside' may sound, it is not altogether needless for faithful characterization. Such occasions are not rare in everyday life, when a person, while talking to another person has to conceal the real feelings of his mind and has to make such replies as are quite contrary to his feelings. Facial expressions without words may not suffice for this purpose, and moreover the person in question may not like to betray his innermost feelings even on his face. In such cases the 'aside' is very essential ; but as in big theatres of today it has to be spoken aloud to make it audible to the last man, it seems very unnatural, and so it has been dropped by the modern playwright.

Next we come to dialogue proper, that is, conversation between two or more characters. This is the most effective, if not the only instrument for proper characterization and plot-development. Most of the playwrights of the ninteenth century as also a few of the early twentieth century have shown no skill in their dialogue, nor have they succeeded in making it forceful and lively. They seem to be ignorant of the significance and right use of dialogue, so that their conversation, on several occasions, neither furthers the plot nor helps in characterization. Often they put lengthy and boring speeches in the mouths of their characters, and their conversation was often unnatural and undramatic.

But our present-day playwrights have greatly improved in this matter. They realize the significance and force of dialogue and most of them make us

of conversation to the best advantage. Their dialogues not only help in the development of the plot and character-portraying but they are often very lively, forceful and drmatic. The dialogues of our problem plays are very simple and natural, and with the exception of J. S. Prasada, other historical and mythological playwrights have also used quite easy and brisk dialogue. The language of Prasada's dialogue is sometimes very hard, and difficult to understand : e.g. in 'Rājyaśrī', Act I, Scene I.

देवगुप्त — वाह, कितना सुरभित समीर है। घ्राण तृप्त हो गया, मस्तिष्क जैसे हंसने लगा और ग्लानि का तो पता नहीं। सुरमा, तुम्हारा स्थान कितना सरम्य है। (देखकर) अरे! तुम्हारा बालव्यजन भी बन गया, कितना सुन्दर है। etc.

Such hard and poetical dialogue can find a nice place in books, and can make an interesting reading material, but it is highly unsuitable for the stage. In performance the actors won't wait to give the audience some time to think out the meaning of their utterances. Not only is such a dialogue difficult for an ordinary audience to understand and enjoy, it is equally hard for an ordinary character to speak it out correctly on the stage.

Not only that. At certain places Prasada's dialogue becomes so hard and philosophical, that it is ~~is~~ difficult to understand it. Not only in a theatre, but even in reading such dialogue can be understood only after pondering over it. Even highly-educated persons have to reflect on such philosophical utterances in order to make out their proper sense : e.g. the following conversation between Krsna and Arjuna in the opening scene of Prasada's 'Naga-Yajna' :

कृष्ण — सखे! सृष्टि एक व्यापार है, कार्य है। इसका कुछ न कुछ उद्देश्य अवश्य है; फिर ऐसी निराशा क्यों? द्वन्द्व तो कल्पित है, भ्रम है इसी का निवारण होना आवश्यक है। देखो, दिन का अप्रत्यक्ष होना ही रात्रि है, ~~प्रकाश~~ आलोक का अदर्शन ही अंधकार है। ये विपक्षी द्वन्द्व अभाव हैं। क्या तुम कह सकते हो ~~कि~~ कि अभाव की भी कोई सत्ता है। कभी नहीं।

अर्जुन — पर यदि कोई दुःख, रात्रि, जड़ता और पाप आदि को ही सत्ता माने और अंधकार ही को निश्चय जाने तो?

कृष्ण — तो फिर जीव दुःख के भंवर में भी आनन्द की उत्कट अभिलाषा क्यों करता है? रात्रि के अंधकार में दीपक क्यों जलाता है? क्या वास्तव में वास्तविकता की ओर उसका झुकाव नहीं है? अवश्य। जिन पदार्थों की शक्ति अप्रकाशित रहती है उन्हें लोग जड़ कहते हैं किन्तु देखो जिन्हें हम जड़ कहते हैं, वे जब कभी विशेष मात्रा में मिलते हैं तो उनमें एक विशेष शक्ति उत्पन्न हो जाती है, स्पन्दन होता है, जिसे जड़ता नहीं कह सकते। etc.

of conversation to the best advantage. Their dialogues not only help in the development of the plot and character-portraying but they are often very lively, forceful and dramatic. The dialogues of our problem plays are very simple and natural, and with the exception of J.S. [illegible], other historical and mythological playwrights have also used quite easy and brisk dialogue. The language of [illegible]'s dialogue is sometimes very hard, and difficult to understand; e.g. in [illegible], Act I, Scene I.

[illegible]

Such hard and poetical dialogue can find a nice place in books, and can make an interesting reading material, but it is highly unsuitable for the stage. In performance the actors won't wait to give the audience some time to think out the meaning of their utterances. Not only is such a dialogue difficult for an ordinary audience to understand and enjoy, it is equally hard for an ordinary character to speak it out correctly on the stage.

Not only that. At certain places [illegible]'s dialogue becomes so hard and philosophical, that it is difficult to understand it. Not only in a theatre, but even in reading such dialogue can be understood only after pondering over it. Even highly-educated persons have to reflect on such philosophical utterances in order to make out their proper sense; e.g. the following conversation between Rama and Arjuna in the opening scene of [illegible]'s '[illegible]':

[illegible]

But the dialogue in most of the modern plays is fairly easy to understand, is brisk, lively, and interesting. In Prasada's own plays too simple dialogue is not altogether wanting, especially in his later dramas.

Another feature of modern drama which is getting more and more prominent these days, under the influence of Western drama, is the tendency to write lengthy stage-directions before every scene and in course of the scenes as well. In these stage-directions the playwrights present us a vivid word-picture of the men and women, rooms and gardens and other paraphernalia with which they deal. While formerly the playwrights were satisfied with adding one line on their hero or some other leading character, the modern playwright devotes almost one page to his or her description from top to toe. For instance, the stage direction to the opening scene of 'Śaśigupta' by Seth Govind Das, takes as many as 38 lines. It will be interesting to quote a few lines therefrom --

समय — उषः काल
[पीछे और दोनों ओर गिरि-शृंग दिखते हैं। पीछे के पर्वत ऊंचे हैं, जो दोनों ओर से ढालू होते हुए सामने नीचे हो गये हैं। पीछे के शृंगों में दूर ऊंचे ऊंचे तीन शिखरों वाला एक शृंग दिखाई देता है, यह सब शृंगों में ऊंचा है। इसकी चोटियां हिम से आच्छादित हैं। नीचे की श्रेणियां वृक्षों और तृणों से हरी हैं। भिन्न भिन्न तरु भिन्न भिन्न आकारों के पत्रों तथा पुष्पों से लदे हुए हैं। इन हरित-श्रेणियों में यत्र-तत्र जल से प्रपात गिर रहे हैं। उदय होते हुए सूर्य की सुनहरी किरणें हिमाच्छादित शृंगों तथा जल प्रपातों को सवर्ण के समान बना रही हैं। शृंगों के वृक्षों की चिकनी पत्रावली, कुसुम-समूह तथा तृण चलती हुई पवन में लहराते हुए रवि-करों से अद्भुत रंग पा रहे हैं। एक चपटे से शिला खण्ड पर शशिगुप्त और चाणक्य बैठे हैं। etc. etc.

Then the author goes on to describe, in a very lengthy but vivid manner the persons and dresses of 'Śaśigupta (= Candragupta Maurya) and Cāṇakya. The playwright gives such a minute and picturesque description of these two great men, that we begin to find them actually before our eyes. The tendency of long stage-directions is increasing day by day. In certain cases, these stage-directions cover more space than the dialogue, and more action is described through the agency of stage-directions than by means of dialogue. This is especially true of some of the scenes of Seth's Śaśigupta (e.g. Act V scene 1). If this tendency grows in future, it is feared that the dialogue

will be thrown in the background, and these stage-direction will assume greater importance and significance even that dialogue.

In ninteenth century drama, verse was frequently used in course of conversation. The same tendency was noticed in the first quarter of the twentieth century. All the farces of G.P. Srivastava, and some of the serious plays also (e.g. Durgavati of Badri Nath Bhatta) frequently interSpherse the verse in their dialogue. While in Sanskrit drama the verses had much of poetry and sentiment in them, verse in Hindi drama is mostly devoid of any such quality. As a result the verse appears very unnatural and unrealistic in the midst of prose dialogue, when it serves no distinct purpose. Our modern dramatists, therefore, have totally discarded the use of verse in their plays. This discarding of verse from Hindi drama is due to the presence of highly advanced and embellished 'poetical' prose today. Prose has so richly developed today that all sorts of ideas, emotions and feelings can be nicely expressed in it, and the verse, therefore has been rendered useless. In Prasada's 'Nāga-Yajña' for example, the following prose speech of Mānavaka is highly poetical.

दामिनी – आप कहां रहते हैं?

माणवक – यह न पूछो। मैं संसार की एक भूली हुई वस्तु हूं। न मैं किसी को जानना चाहता हूं और न कोई मुझे जानने की चेष्टा करता है। तुमने कभी शरद् के विस्तृत व्योम-मण्डल में रूई के पहल के समान एक छोटा-सा मेघ-खण्ड देखा है? उसके देखते २ विलीन होते या कहीं चले जाते भी तुमने देखा होगा। विशाल कानन की एक वल्लरी की नन्हीं सी पत्ती के छोर पर विदा लेने वाली श्यामल रजनी के शोक-पूर्ण अश्रु-बिन्दु के समान लटके हुए एक हिम-कण को कभी देखा ~~होगा~~ है? और उसे लुप्त होते भी देखा होगा। उसी मेघ खण्ड या हिम कण की तरह मेरी भी विलक्षण स्थिति है। मैं कैसे कह सकता हूं कि कहां रहता हूं, और कब ~~तक~~ रह सकूंगा। ~~मुझसे न पूछो~~।" etc. (Act II Scene 2)

Such sentimental and poetical prose pieces are not wanting in the plays of Prasada, Udaya Sankara Bhatta, Candragupta Vidyalankara and some other modern playwrights. The use of poetical prose in place of verse was first started by Bengali playwrights, and the tendency developed in Hindi drama under that influence.

In addition to emotional and poetical prose, D.L. Roy introduced the system of sweet songs at suitable occasions in his plays for the

enhancement of poetic atmosphere. The chorus of Greek drama also served a similar purpose. Modern Hindi playwrights have readily developed this tendency, and in the works of almost all the leading playwrights of today, we find very sweet and sentimental songs interspersed at appropriate places. These melodious songs, often dripping with emotion, create a very enchanting and highly poetical atmosphere. The following song of Drama in 'Rājyaśrī' (Act II, scene VI) is throbbing with youthful emotion--

संभाले कोई कैसे प्यार।
मचल मचल उठता है चंचल
भर लाता है आंखों में जल
विह्वलन कर, चलता है उसपर
लिये व्यथा का भार
संभाले कोई कैसे प्यार।

Again, the following military song of Aśoka's army is pulsating with the sentiment of heroism (Aśoka, Act II, scene 6)

सुनो वीर। बजती रण भेरी, करती दूर तुम्हें आह्वान
चलो विजय-लक्ष्मी वर लावें, प्राप्त करें वैभव-धन-मान।
स्तब्ध विश्व है निशा अंधेरी
वन-पर्वत-नगरी सुनसान,
यही समय है शत्रु-शिविर पर
जा बरसें बनकर तूफ़ान।

. . . . . .

विजय लाभ है या आत्मार्पण है
सैनिक जीवन का इतिहास
अमर कीर्ति रचने का वीरो
आ पहुंचा है अवसर पास।

But, at certain places Prasada has introduced very difficult songs, with some shadow of mysticism in them. The language of most of the songs of 'Śaśigupta' is also quite difficult for an ordinary audience. These songs cannot succeed on the stage, although they might be well relished by learned men in the seclusion of their study.

So we find that almost all our modern plays abound in beautiful songs. But we have to remember that the problem plays of Seth Govind

Das and Pt. Laksmi Narayana Misra have totally boycotted the songs. In 'Sewāpatha', 'Santosa Kahān', 'Mahatva Kise', 'Tyāga Ya Grahana' and 'Rāja Yoga' etc. we find an absolute lack of songs, while 'Garībī Aur Amīrī' is an exception.

The second important side of diction is the use of different dialects by different characters. The use of various dialects adds to the realistic atmosphere of the play. Even in romantic Sanskrit drama, various Prakrits are put in the mouths of females and uneducated or low characters. Some of the playwrights of the ninteenth century also observed this dialectic distinction, as we have shown in Chapter IX. Some of the playwrights of the modern period also observe this realism in the speech of their characters. The following quotations will elucidate our remark--

अग्रवाला — तो अब महाशयो! हज़रात! लेडिज़ ऐंड जेंटलमेन! मैं एक प्रस्ताव आपकी सेवा में उपस्थित करता हूं, एक तज़वीज़ आपकी खिदमत में पेश करता हूं, एम मूविंग ए रिज़ोल्यूशन नाउ। . . . .

एक बंगाली — (खड़े होकर) सभापती मैंहाशॅय! और मैंहाशॅय लोगो! हॅम ईशॅ रिज़ोल्यूशन का मॅन से शेकिंड कॅरता हुं (कुछ तालियां बजती हैं), हमारा शुजॅलां शुफॅलां मॅलयॅज शीतलां जोठो बड़ा भूमि है, उशी का लोग हॅमारा बड़ा भाई जोठो शेक्रेटरियॅट में काम करता etc. etc.

एक सिख — (हाथ में मोटा सा डंडा ले खड़े होकर) अरे इक भी हुयार ठेकेदार इस पार्टी दे नेड़े नई जायगा। पी० डब्ल्यू० डी० में इक्क दो ठेकेदारां दी इमारतें गिराई हो, हज़ारां दी गिरा दई। . . . .

एक मराठा — (खड़े होकर अपनी बड़ी सी लाल पगड़ी सम्हालते हुए) पोलपाटलाटणा लेकर घर में पतल्या पतल्या पोल्पा लटवाता और खाता है, चांगला-चांगला कापड पेनता है, मोठ्या-मोठ्या बंगल्या में रेता है और सोशलिस्ट बनता है। etc. [Seth Govind Das's Sewa-Path Act II, scene 4]

At the same time we find Prasada in all his plays, U.S. Bhatta in his 'Muktipatha', Govind Das in his 'Śasigupta', Ugra in his 'Gangā Kā Beṭā' etc., using one and the same language for all their character. All their characters, educated or illiterate, Indian or alien, big or small use one language, viz. Sanskrit-ridden Hindi in their speeches.

Summing up, we can say that our modern drama is fashioning more under the influence of the West and the screen that the classical influence, which is steadily dying out. Our playwrights have borrowed realism and the exigencies of the stage from the West. They have banished the Nandi, the Prastāvanā and the Bharata-Vakya from their plays, and have given due deference to story-interest and the variety of the plot.

But if we go deep, we can easily find the classical influence working even today in our drama. Inspite of the profound influence of the West, our playwrights have preserved the sentiment and the poetic atmosphere of their plays. Rather they have added to it by inserting melodious songs in their works (which is not in conformity with the modern Western practice). Realism is no doubt liked by our playwright and audience today, but romantic plays are equally or even more popular than the realistic plays. Classical drama does not admit of tragedy, and we find that our drama, inspite of the penetrating influence of Western tragedy, has mostly a happy ending. Playwrights still aim at idealism in their characterization, and victory of virtue and nobility is the dominant note of our drama even today. Our modern audience is no less satisfied in witnessing the innumerable trials and tribulations through which a noble character passes, and ultimately triumps over evil and wickedness. In the medieval performances, characters were selected to inspire the spirit of heroism among the audience, and that tendency persists in our historical drama. Under the influence of the west, our modern playwrights freely violate the classical rule which banned the scenes of battle, murder kissing and embracing etc. on the stage. Now these scenes are frequently found in our drama.

Chapter XXVI.

HINDI STAGE

The lack of Hindi stage has been greatly responsible for the late growth and paucity of Hindi drama. It is again due to the absence of a regular, standard stage that we find most of our literary dramas not very much suited to stage performance. There is, in fact, no regular stage even now which the playwrights should keep in view while writing their plays. Consequently if their plays serve and succeed more as reading material rather than stage performances, they are not to blame.

Our classical Sanskrit drama was written for the stage. As we learn from the Prastavanas, even difficult plays like Bhavabhūti's Uttara-rāma-Carita used to be represented on the stage. The seats of such performances used to be the royal courts or famous temples, and the occasion used to be some religious, social or political festival. That the audience at these performances might have been restricted or selected can be well entertained, but the inclusion of various Prakrits in the body of these dramas may also point towards a mixed audience. But we do not know of any theatres or audience-halls which were meant exclusively for the common man and where only the masses gathered together for dramatic performances.

Gradually this stage of Sanskrit drama also passed into oblivion. It was during the early medieval period that the classical stage was thrown into disuse due to political unrest, religious chaos and hostile tendency of the conquering Muslim rulers. The fanaticism and oppression of most of the early Muslim rulers reduced the social status and political freedom of the Hindus, and the latter gradually developed a slave mentality, slowly forgot their past civilization and culture and took to medieval Muslim ways. Naturally, in such an atmosphere there was little scope for the classical stage to survive. So, the tradition of the classical

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Gradually this stage of Sanskrit drama also passed into oblivion. It was during the early medieval period that the classical stage was thrown into shade due to political unrest, religious chaos and hostile tendency of the conquering Muslim rulers. The fanaticism and aversion of most of the early Muslim rulers reduced the social status and political freedom of the Hindus, and the latter gradually developed a slave mentality, slowly forgot their past civilisation and culture and took to manners and Muslim ways. Naturally in such an atmosphere there was little chance for the classical stage to survive. The downfall of the classical

stage was lost during early medieval period, and we find no stage that replaced it.

Early Hindi Stage

But soonafter the abolition of the regular literary stage, there rose new kinds of performances in the later Moghul period. These performances had some elements of classical drama, while they had an essentially medieval atmosphere and impression. The Rāsa-līlā, Rāma-līlā, swāngs etc. belong to this category. It is in these performances that we come across the earliest Hindi stage. These troupes used to visit different places, and the popular stories of Puran Bhakta, Gopi Chand and Hakikat Rai were often put to the stage in a medieval manner. Their stage was very ordinary and of a domestic nature, and their acting was often overacting or no acting at all. Boys of tender age used to play the feminine roles; masks were often used, and these performances were accompanied by medieval music and dance.

Need of Stage for Drama.

The literary drama of Hindi rose only in the ninteenth century. Before we proceed to discuss the stage in that century, we may deal with one pertinent question, i.e. 'Is stage at all required for drama ? Can drama not flourish without the theatre ? We find that the very word 'Nāṭaka' implies that the 'Naṭa' (actor) or 'Nāṭya' (acting) is indispensable for it. Nāṭaka means only that composition which is acted on the stage. In this respect, all those plays which are meant for study alone cannot be called 'Nāṭakas' at all. But there can be one more counter-argument. We admit that stage is essential for drama, but that stage may as well be the stage of mind, and not the stage of the theatre. In a theatre, a particular drama can be well-represented only if there are expert actors and director. On the other hand if the reader is gifted with a fine aesthetic sense, he can stage the same play is a much finer manner on the stage of his mind. He can relish his own mental performance more than the ugly performance by an untrained group of actors.

But that doesnot satisfy our demand. Reading a play, satisfactory though it may be to some, especially those with a vivid imagination, can never take the place of seeing it in the theatre. The reader may have read a play dozens of times, but until he has seen a capable company

of actors perform it before an audience, the play has never really come to life for him. One thing more. Although a man with vivid imagination may enjoy a drama even by going through it, yet the number of such persons is very limited. Even highly educated and cultured people enjoy a drama much more when it is performed than by simply studying it. Today, almost every grown-up man and most of such women go to the pictures. But if they simply read a printed copy of the dialogues of a picture, they will never like it or relish it as much as by seeing it on the screen. The picture or play is totally lifeless and devoid of all force and charm in reading, while in performance its interest and charm increases several times.

Inspite of all this we can say that there can be and there are several good plays which may never be or have never been acted. The reading of plays in book form is more popular in Hindi than their stage-performance, perhaps due to the lack of a standard stage. But the important thing to remember is that whether it has ever been acted or not, a play is written so that it could be acted. The story told in a play may hold a reader as well as it does an audience in a theatre ; but it is written so that it could be, at any time, under the proper conditions, come to life, by being enacted before an audience.

It is true that sometimes excellent plays are spoiled by poor acting of mediocre actors. Prem Chand's 'Ranga-Bhumi' was certainly spoiled when it was recently presented in a picture by an unskilled director with a team or ordinary actors. In such cases, fearing poor acting of prominent plays, everybody with brilliant imagination is justified in choosing to read these plays and stage them in his mind. When Charles Lamb, in his ' On the Tragedies of Shakespeare' put forward that Shakespeare's plays were incapable of being acted on the stage, and were more satisfying when they were read, his statement was really shocking to the lover of Shakespeare. But we should remember that Lamb idealized Shakespeare, that only a perfect performance of Shakespeare's plays could satisfy him, and that standards of acting had fallen low in his times, and so his imagination could serve him better than could the theatre. Swinburne, always greatly interested in the drama and a writer of plays throughout his career, was so disgusted by a performance he saw in his early days that

he vowed never to visit a theatre again. Plays are meant for the stage, but many true lovers of the drama prefer to keep them in the theatre of their mind.

Hindi Stage in the Ninteenth Century

The Hindi stage in the ninteenth century had, in addition to the medieval stage of Rāsalīlās etc., two distinct forms, viz. the Parsi stage and the stage of literary drama. The Parsi stage had been borrowed directly from the English theatres in India. In Calcutta an English theatre existed before the battle of Plassey (1757). This old play-house called the Calcutta Theatre was meant solely for the recreation of a handful of European merchants, missionaries and officials, but a fundamental link with the Indian population was established by occasional invitations extended to rich Bengali landlords. Later on in 1795 an Indian theatre was built in Calcutta with the efforts of a Russain adventurer, Herasim Lebedeff, who translated two English plays -- 'The Disguise' and 'Love is the Best Doctor' -- into Bengali; both these plays were successfully staged in November 1795 and March 1796, with the help of native actors of both sexes. The first permanent stage in Bengal was constructed on July 31, 1858, when 'Ratnāvalī' was staged in Bengali. It was the first Bengali drama that was staged to the accompaniment of the national orchestra, after the manner of English theatres. This was followed by several other private theatres, which were meant only for privileged classes and distinguished guests. Disappointed with these, Girish Candra Ghoşa, 'The father of Bengali theatre' boldly launched the idea of a public theatre for the middle class run by amateurs. In 1872 he established the 'National - Theatre' , which was the first regular theatre in which actors received salaries and the tickets were sold to the public.

In Bombay also the English people had established the theatre for their amusement. The first Bombay Theatre, which stood on the old Bombay Green (Elphinstone Circle) was built by subscription in 1770 on a site granted by Government. At this theatre European amateurs used to perform musical comedies, farces, pantomimes, and occasional productions of Shakespeare and of other serious plays. Some of the distinguished Parsis and Hindus were bound to be impressed by these novel performances.

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Hindi Stage in the Nineteenth Century

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In Bombay also the English people had established the theatre for their amusement. The first Bombay Theatre, which stood on the old Bombay Green (Elphinstone Circle) was built by subscription in 1770 and was assisted by Government. In this theatre European amateurs used to perform musical comedies, farces, melodramas, and occasional productions of Shakespeare and of other serious plays. Some of the distinguished Parsis and Hindus were bound to be fascinated by these novel performances.

Accordingly, in 1842 a private theatre was built by Jagan Nath Shanker Seth, which became available for European and Indian productions at fixed daily rent. This later developed into the Marathi stage, and a few Marathi dramatic clubs came into existence ; the most prominent Maratha Companies were the 'Bāla Gandharava' and the 'Mahārāṣtra'.

The Parsis, with the gift of imitating Western models were the true pioneers in Bombay theatrical productions, although they were originally inspired after seeing the Marathi players in that city. They started as amateurs about 1851, giving performances only on Saturday nights. As some organising syndicates began to derive huge profits from these performances rival Parsi and Gujrati companies hired or built their theatres and began to run on a commercial basis, trying to vie with each other in all possible melodramatic and farcical devices -- thus expending enormous sums on all kinds of stage machinery, dazzling costumes, painted curtains, disregarding all canons of art, often indulging in gross anachronisms.

Having established their position in Bombay, these Parsi companies began to tour Northern India, established permanent theatres in bigger cities and paid shorter visits to smaller ones too. In the North they adopted Hindustani or Urdu as their medium. Seth Pestonjee Framjee is supposed to be the first Parsi gentleman, who opened his 'Original Theatrical Company' in Bombay in Circa 1870. He was followed by numberous other Parsis and Hindus, and in a short time several theatrical companies of the Parsi nature, e.g. 'Indian Imperial Theatrical Company', 'India Opera Theatrical Company', 'Lightning Theatrical Company', 'Parsi Jubilee Theatre Company of Bombay' etc. were established. These companies adopted the English stage for their purpose, and introduced some minor changes in it. They aimed at providing more and more entertainment to the people, never trying to educate or refine their taste.

It may also be remembered that although the Parsi stage originated in Bombay in circa 1870, a similar stage had already been set at the court of Nawab Wajid Ali of Avadh, where Amanat 's 'Inder Sabha' had been performed in 1853. But the common source of this stage as also of the Parsi stage was the English stage in India, which had been established for the entertainment of the English people by their own dramatic clubs.

The literary drama borrowed its stage from the Parsi theatre. Our literary playwrights were not opposed to the stage of the Parsi theatre; they simply disliked their cheap entertainment and deteriorating artistic standard. The only difference, therefore, in their theatre was that their plays used to have an atmosphere of purity and an artistic touch, which the Parsi theatre lacked altogether. As these playwrights totally disregarded the public taste, their works and performances failed to be popular among the common people, which were mad after Parsi performances. Their plays, on the other hand, attracted only a selected scholarly audience, or served as reading material alone. Bharatendu took the lead in forming a dramatic club, and the 'Bharatendu Nāṭaka Maṇḍalī' also successfully staged some of the plays of Bharatendu and his contemporaries. Bharatendu, in his 'Nāṭaka' informs us that the first Hindi drama staged in a Banares Theatre was 'Jānakī Maṅgal'. In 1877 a Bengali theatre called 'Vidyānta Nāṭyaśālā' existed in Lucknow ; at this theatre Hindi translations of Bengali plays were often acted on the stage. Later, Bharatendu's 'Andhera Nagarī' was staged in National Theatre at Benares. But we have to remember that the vast majority of the audience was attracted towards the Parsi theatres and their melodramas.

Hindi Stage in the Twentieth Century.

The Parsi theatrical companies which were extremely popular in the ninteenth century, retained their fullest popularity in the first quarter of the twentieth century also. More companies of their kind cam into existence, and these 'Nāṭaka-Maṇḍalīs' began to tour all big towns of Northern India. Although the talkies have dealt a death-blow to these Parsi companies, yet even today, they can find a number of admirers among the masses. These companies continued their melodramatic and farcical devices, their boisterous humour, attractive settings and inartistic pursuits. But one very important event took place during this period. So far the Parsi theatre had patronized Urdu in its performances, but now Hindi began to have its due share. The credit of introducing Hindi on the Parsi stage goes to Nārāyaṇa Prasāda Betāb.

The literary drama which had revived in 1912 after a pause of some

twenty years was staged by Private or Amateur clubs. After Bharatendu, the 'Vyākula-Bhārata-Nāṭaka Maṇḍalī' tried to popularise the literary drama. This company staged several plays, of which 'Buddha Deva' became very popular. In addition to this company, Amateur clubs of different Colleges schools and other institutions occasionally represented literary dramas. But, due to certain reasons the performances of these private companies and amateur clubs could not be very successful and popular. The most important equipments of the stage are the curtains and the light effect. In order to understand and appreciate a particular scene, the audience must know two things: firstly the place and atmosphere amidst which a particular event took place, and secondly, the time when it happened. The curtain denotes the place and atmosphere, while the light-effects reflect the time. If, for instance, an event took place in a palace at night the scene on the stage should be set in such a way that a curtain should be there with a palace (or part thereof) painted on it, and a proper arrangement of light should denote the night-time. In this way we need several curtains for a single play, which means a lot of expenditure. A suitable arrangement of these two things is not possible without ample expenditure. But the amateur clubs and private companies cannot, mostly, spend so much on their equipment. They keep a few curtains of their own, and occasionally borrow or hire a few more, where it is possible. Consequently, their performances is not very perfect and impressive and sometimes spoils an excellent play due to these handicaps.

In addition to the difficulty of curtains and lights, the acting in the private clubs is not very lively and admirable. For the most part, high-born and learned people hesitate to participate in the performances. The general opinion of the people regarding the theatre and acting was, and to some extent is, not very high in India. Those who participate in a performance are looked down upon by others, although conditions are fastly changing these days. The natural result of this feeling is that only low-class, meagrely educated, or less-gifted people offer themselves for acting which is often not of a very high standard.

Jaya Śankara Prasad has pointed out another fact that stands in the way of success of our literary performances. Until recently tender-

aged boys had to play the feminine role, and even today in some of the Colleges, only one sex participates in the performances. In the West not only do people of very high birth and education participate in the perform-ance, but the roles of male and female characters are played by respective sexes. In our country there is not so much freedom for both the sexes to mix freely with each other or to take part in a dramatic performance together. Consequently, the acting on our stage is not very natural and realistic, as boys cannot so nicely and naturally play the part of the fair sex. The tendency of keeping the two sexes apart is gradually disappearing, and women are coming forward to play their respective roles in drama. This is an encouraging feature, and can give greater success to our drama.

Our Stage Today.

The theatre of the West is developing fast with the screen. Scientific devices of various sorts are used for producing stage-illusions. The scenes of sea, snowfall, rain, and battle etc. are shown very successfully on the stage with the help of scientific devices. The stage is very much advanced in the West, and the stage illusions create an atmosphere of reality and naturalness.

But the case is quite different with us. Without hesitation we can say that even today Hindi has got no standard stage. The playwright has no stage in view while writing his dramas. A regular and standard stage is essential for Hindi drama, as we shall discuss in the next chapter.

Leaving aside the Parsi stage and its cheap entertainments, which have ceased to exist now we come across three kinds of stage today: firstly the amateur clubs ; secondly the screen, and thirdly the wireless. Amateur clubs, which mostly consist of the students of Colleges and schools, or of laymen with aesthetic taste and deep interest in drama, are found in almost every city or big town. With few exceptions, the stage of these clubs is poorly equipped. They have not very many good curtains, nor appropriate costumes or proper arrangements of light. But it is highly encouraging to find that, in most of these clubs, both the sexes

participate without hesitation, and their performance is usually natural, artistic and appropriate. One-act-plays have become very popular in these clubs, and these clubs have a bright future as we can judge from their popularity today.

The second form of our stage is the screen. Although it was introduced in India only a few years ago, the success it has achieved in the meantime is very encouraging and admirable. Today there are numerous companies which produce pictures for the screen. It is true that most of these companies have simply replaced the Parsi theatrical companies and their cheap tactics, still there are several others that maintain a fairly high standard of art. The New Theatres, Rājkamal Kalā Mandir, Bombay Talkies, Minerva Talkies etc. are some of the leading companies that produce fairly artistic pictures.

The screen has set aside all the restrictions of the stage. Several supernatural and difficult scenes that cannot be represented on the stage can be beautifully shown on the screen. Now, the playwright is not required to restrict his imagination at every step, keeping in view the limitations of the stage. On the other hand, he can give a free flight to his imagination and can add all sorts of scenes that can be brought to the screen.

The talkies have greatly improved the standard of acting also. There are numerous film stars of the superiormost class in acting, sing-ing, dancing and beauty. Many pictures of our country have been rewarded in foreign lands. Our screen is constantly progressing at present, and eminent actors and directors occasionally visit western centres (espec-ially Hollywood) to have new training and experience in their art.

But so far cinema has patronized novel alone. Although some of the present day Hindi-playwrights choose to write their plays for the screen, still the cinema-directors have not shown any liking for drama. Mostly these film companies have their own story writers, dialogue-writers and song-composers. Several persons contribute littel bits, which ultimately assume the form of a picture on the screen. In other cases, some famous novel is dramatized, with necessary alterations and

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omissions, on the screen. The reason for this apathy towards drama cannot be understood. Perhaps the cinema people look upon drama as a hostile form of entertainment, or perhaps they find novel more suited to their requirements. But we hope a compromise between the two in the near future and are sure that drama will be more readily accepted for the screen in future.

The last and the latest type of drama is the Radio-play. It is of a very recent origin, and it receives quite a large audience. Short plays, mostly one act plays, are acted on the radio, but these plays can only entertain one's ears and mind , and not the eyes. A motion picture is the collaboration of the playwright, actor and director. Its audience, far greater than that which ever saw or sees a play, does not share in the collaboration at all. Dramatically speaking, the outstanding weakness in a picture is the absence of a bond between screen and auditorium, the inharmonious relationship between a recorded and to that extent mechanised performance and a changing living audience. A radio-play with an equally great audience, cuts down on the collaboration still further. The director plays a subordinate part in a radio-play -- the collaborators are author and actor, and the play is not acted but appropriately read into a microphone.

Radio-dramas are the easiest means of entertainment, because a person can enjoy it in his home in a peaceful atmosphere and easy posture. He is not required to go out to the cinema-hall or the theatre for that purpose. But here too, only a vivid imagination can fully appreciate a radio play. While the drama is being read into the microphone, the listener should go on vividly picturing the scene before his mind's eyes. The system of radio-play is on the increase these days, and the technique and structure of drama may undergo a change as a result of these radio-plays.

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apter XXVII.

FUTURE OF HINDI DRAMA

After all India has shattered the shackles of slavery. After an age of hard struggle and sacrifice has set in the era of Independence. New thrills of liberty have brought new responsibilities with them. Slavish mentality and inferiority complex are being fastly shaken off, and the people are taking a turn towards independent thinking and action. Great changes have taken place since the day India achieved her independence, and greater ones are expected in future. A complete overhauling of the political, social and economic life is essential. And we earnestly hope that India shall take swifter and longer strides on the path of progress.

Future of Hindi in Free India.

With the shaking off of the British yoke of slavery, the status of Hindi language and literature has greatly risen. During the British rule, English language and literature flourished in our country under the prompt patronage and strong support of the government. English was not only the court-language of India, but also the fashion of the day. Next to English, Urdu and Persian were popular, mostly under the surviving Moghul influence. The policy of the British government too was to encourage Urdu as far as possible, and to keepdown Hindi language and literature. In fact Hindi received no encouragement from any quarter, neither from the foreign government nor from the public. The public saw no good in studying Hindi language and literature (which were not in the good books of the government) while the government deliberately tried to remove all traces of Hindu language, life and literatuer from among the Hindus. They (the government) meant to make the Hindus -- the most forward majority of India -- forget their glorious past, to look upon the alien government as a blessing, alien literature and culture as golden. They aimed at making the Hindus thoroughly un-Hind

in practice, although Hindu in name. It was due to the untiring efforts of the Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā of Kāśī and other leading towns of India, of the Sāhitya Sammelan Prayāga, of numerous lovers of Hindi in the educated classes, that Hindi flourished, although in face of mighty obstacles and therefore at a low pace.

But now the conditions have radically changed. The English language cannot remain high in our country when the English rulers have left. It will go as soon as it possible for us to replace it by another Indian language. And of all the modern Indian Vernaculars, Hindi is spoken by a great majority and is understood by a still greater number of people. Now when we have achieved independence, it will be shameful for us to retain foreign goods -- may it be men or language -- for long. These have got to be replaced by similar Indian element, and the sooner it is done, the better. So we have to adopt some Indian vernacular as the lingua franca of India, and of all our modern vernaculars, Hindi has the greatest claim for that status. We may have to make Hindi language a little more accommodating for other provinces, but Hindi language in Deva Nāgarī script is bound to be the federal language of India. Although it has not been so declared by the Constituent Assembly as yet, but from the wide support which Hindi is getting from all quarters (although there is some opposition in the south as well), we can rightly anticipate the bright future and status of Hindi.

And as soon as Hindi attains that status, its literature will be immensely popular and it will flourish by leaps and bounds. Several provinces and Universities have made Hindi compulsory at some stage or the other. Therefore we can safely say that within ten years Hindi will begin to enjoy the same position and popularity in India which English enjoyed a couple of years ago. Consequently Hindi literature will also become the fashion of the day, although English-occupied minds of most of our educated men may find it hard to change.

Future of Hindi Drama.

Today short story is most popular in Hindi literature, and drama is not so popular even as the novel today is. Still, drama is not at all neglected and we find a considerable number of people taking interest in it. If, again, there are geniuses in the field of poetry,

short story and novel, drama too is not wanting in eminent playwrights. Naturally, therefore, as the number of Hindi reading people will grow immensely in future, more and more playwrights will also comeforth,who, at present, shirk from devoting their time and talents to drama owing to the minority of the drama-loving public. Not only will the number of the playwrights increase considerably, some of these new playwrights may prove to be real geniuses, and they may make an immortal contribution to Hindi drama.

Influence of the West is expected to be still wider in future, but what we want is that our playwrights, in addition to their borrowings from the West, should give a clear Indian, rather Hindi impression to their works. They should explore new avenues of dramatic technique, and should make some inventions in this side. Their dramas should have a strong reflection of originality, and even the Western influence should be so adapted as to give an entirely Indian shape to it. Our drama needs a thorough Indian Ibsen or Shaw who would tackle contemporary problems with the earnestness and artistic appeal of these writers. In addition to making new additions to dramatic technique, they should invent new types of drama, and should try to make it more useful, and its theme should be selected from a much wider sphere.

dio-Plays

Radio-plays are very popular these days and they are going to be still more popular with the educated class: those people who are afraid of poor acting, and who can vividly represent the play on the stage of their mind will take more interest in radio-plays, provided those plays are written by competent playwrights. They can relish radio-plays perfect-ly in the calm atmosphere of their study, while in the theatre or cinema-hall there may be much noise and interruption by late-comers and people with less developed minds. At home they are free to think with the drama can add notes and comments on paper, and can enjoy the plays much better than in a theatre.

Stage and Screen.

Besides the wireless-drama, the drama of the screen is very popular these days. It is highly regrettable that most of our Indian films are inartistic and even vulgar. Their humour is boisterous and

their atmosphere is not literary. Most of the film-companies are no more than slightly better substitutes of Parsi theatrical companies. There are a few companies which keep art and refined taste also in view, but their number is very small. With the popularity of the screen it is highly essential that our film-directors and producers should change their old point of view. In free India they have a very important duty to discharge, and as the film-audience is the largest of all audiences today, so they should be very careful in steadily modifying and culturing the low tastes of the masses. They should make wonderful contributions to dramatic art, and should compete the American and English films in matters of art and technique.

Inspite of the talkies and the radio-plays, the genuine place of drama still remains to be the stage, i.e. the theatre. When we look at the wide appeal and immense popularity of cinema, we sometimes fear lest the theatre should be destroyed. by the cinema. People foresee all the expert actors and actresses being absorbed into the film studios and the younger dramatists writing directly for the screen. Moreover, we see that the cinema can achieve many things impossible to the stage, and therefore a cinema-show is more interesting and appealing than a stage performance. While there is a very limited scope of scenes on the stage, the cinema can successfully show all difficult and supernatural scene. A huge paraphernalia and equipments are needed for every theatre ; but in the case of cinema, the studio-people have to bother about all these equipments while the picture can be simultaneously shown at so many places, without any botheration of collecting necessary material for film-production.

Still, in spite of all these facilities and advantages, cinema cannot serve the purpose of stage, nor can it altogether replace the latter. Cinema is after all a shadow, and there is a lot of difference between shadow and reality. While seeing a picture, we can never forget that we are seeing only shadows; that the man and woman moving on the screen are not real human beings, but merely their moving picutres. The living actors and actresses that work on the stage have their own attraction and charm. The shadows and pictures of cinema can never oust the living characters from the stage.

Moreover, in a theatre every little fault in acting etc. can be rectified in the following performances, while the drawbacks of a film remain there permanently. In cinema there is no scope for every-day improvement in acting and stage-setting. In addition to this the actors of the stage come in direct contact with the audience, and have the opportunity of receiving their encouragement in case their acting is excellent and superb. The actors of the film have no audience to encourage them, and they are subservient to the will and whim of the Director. The limited audience which is present at the time of shooting has no part to play, because they are mere passive onlookers. secondly, at the time of shooting, a picture of two and a half hours does not take that much time. It may take several days or even weeks, since each line takes a long time for perfect acting and pronunciation.

In the Western countries also it was feared that the stage would be entirely superseded by the film, but these fears were unfounded. In England, America and other Western countries, people still prefer the play which is performed by flesh-and-blood actors, and hence all the theatres are doing well. Many of them are filled to capacity at every performance. A good play will always attract an audience, provided the audience gets to hear about it.

The gramophone, we find, has not killed the Orchestra ; the camera-man has not destroyed the painter ; the wireless news has not made an end of the daily newspaper. And so there is room for both the film play and for the stage-play. At the same time, our Indian stage will have to be developed on highly scientific lines in order to compete with the screen successfully. Like the West we shall have to introduce a revolving stage with the latest scientific devices and tactics.

A Practical Suggestion

Before closing this chapter we intend to emphasize the need of a regular, standard stage for Hindi drama. Our drama has suffered greatly due to the lack of a standard stage ; and it cannot grow to its fullest dimensions unless the latter is established. The greatest need of Hindi drama is a first-rate theatre, with latest equipments. It is true that Amateur Clubs and private dramatic societies are doing their part well; they may do better in future. But their sources are limited

and they have no strong backing. These clubs are doing a useful service to the cause of drama, yet a major enterprise in this direction. will simply prove a boon to the development of Hindi drama. In the following we put forward a practical suggestion and workable scheme.

For the right development of Hindi drama and for the proper education of public taste it is essential that one Model Theatre should exist in every big city. Bigger cities like Delhi, Allahabad and Bombay etc. may have more than one theatre each. It is further essential that these theatres should be owned, managed and strictly supervised by the Government. Private enterprise, I believe, cannot be so efficient and perfect. But private parties should have the freedom to establish their own theatres, if they so desire. These model theatres should be situated in a central but suitable place of the city, where everybody, young and old, man or woman, could easily go. They should be richly equipped with most upto-date scientific material in order to produce most appropriate and natural stage effects, should have a large number of suitable curtains, necessary dresses and the materials of make-up. The Board of Directors should consist of eminent playwrights, directors and actors. The actors and directors should be paid decent salaries, so that they should not feel easily tempted to run over to the talkies. Further, they should be so selected that they should look upon the theatre as their hobby and not merely as a source of living. They should be true lovers of art, and should be fired with a passion of making the theatre as brilliant a success as possible.

Playwrights also should be paid or rewarded liberally. Handsome prizes and honours should be conferred on talented playwrights ; this encouragement will not only keep them close to the theatre, but will also produce several more and better playwrights, aspiring for those honours and prizes.

Both the sexes should give their fullest co-operation in the acting of dramas in these theatres. Only women, educated art-loving and belonging to noble families, can play the role of women in a surpassingly beautiful manner. Their presence on the stage will highly raise the standard and prestige of the theatre and their natural, perfect acting will attract

crowds of cinema-goers, who take keen interest in the person and acting of film-stars.

It is true that in the beginning, the government shall have to undertake a large expenditure on these theatres. But as compared with other departments (e.g. Health etc.) this expenditure will be insignificant -ly while this department (of theatre) will be equally or even more useful than the Department of Health. These theatres, if properly managed and strictly supervised, can restore sound health to the mind and taste of the public, which is deteriorating everyday under the unhealthy influence of films. That will be a great achievement of the government , if they, with a limited expenditure, succeed in improving the morals, manners and outlook of the people. Besides refining their taste, the government can instil a feeling of patriotism, dignity and confidence in the people. In addition to literary and artistic plays, the government can plan to show propaganda plays once or twice a week, or can carry on their propaganda or publicity, just before or after each show, like the news-reels of the films.

In every way, we are sure that the effort of the government will be crowned with glorious success. Besides this, these theatres won't prove white elephant to them. They will not be a source of expenditure only; if properly looked after, these theatres can be a source of huge income to the government. As we have emphasized already, if these theatres have latest-equipments and stage-craft, if they possess the co-operation of eminent playwrights (which they will) and educated actors of both sexes of noble families, they will suddenly begin to attract large crowds of people. Superb acting, melodious songs, lively (but not boisterous) humour, and artistic settings can thoroughly satisfy those who are addicted to cinema. Flesh-and-blood performances shall have their force and charm, and the theatre will be extremely popular within a couple of years. After that these theatres will become a source of income to the government.

The effect of such an enterprise will be simply surprising. Not only will the public taste be soundly educated, Hindi drama itself will

soon shake off all its defects, and will progress in such a way and with such speed that in twenty years it may be able to stand in line with the drama of any other language of the world. The absence of a standard stage has not only retarded, but simply marred the healthy and natural growth of our drama. Our playwrights can keep in view no stage, which they may write for. And once such a one is restored, our drama will flourish by leaps and bounds in quantity as well as quality.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

(Original Works)

Prabodha- Candrodaya ---	by	Vraja-Vāsī-dāsa
Ānanda-Raghunandana Nāṭaka	"	Viśva-nātha-Sinha
Śakuntalā (T*)	"	Raja Lakṣmaṇa Sinha
" (")	"	Newāja
Nahuṣa Nāṭaka	"	Giridharadāsa (alias Gopāla Candra
Uttara-rāma-Carita (T)	"	Devidatta
Ratnāvalī (T)	"	Bhāratendu Hariścandra
Vidyā-Sundara (T)	"	" "
Pākhaṇḍa-Viḍambana (T)	"	" "
Vaidikī Hiṃsā Hiṃsā Na Bhavati	"	" "
Dhanañjaya-Vijaya (T)	"	" "
Karpūra-Mañjarī (T)	"	" "
Mudrā-Rākṣasa (T)	"	" "
Prema-Yoginī ---	"	" "
Satya-Hariścandra	"	" "
Viṣasya Viṣam Auṣadham	"	" "
Śrī Candrāvalī ---	"	" "
Bhārata-Durdaśā ---	"	" "
Bhārata-Jananī (T) ---	"	" "
Nīla-Devī --	"	" "
Andhera Nagarī --	"	" "
Durlabh Bandhu --	"	" "
Satī Pratāpa --	"	" "
Prahlāda-Carita	"	Śrī Niwāsa Dāsa
Taptā-Saṃvaraṇa --	"	" "
Raṇadhīra-Premamohinī	"	" "
Sanyogitā swayamvara	"	" "
Bhārata-Sauhbāgya ---	"	Badrī Nārāyaṇa Chaudhrī 'Premaghana'.
Prayāga-rāmāgamana	"	" "

* T denotes translation.

Varāṅganā-Rahasya	---	by Badri Narayana Chaudhri 'Premaghana'
Vṛddha- Vilāpa	---	" " "
Sarojinī	---	" Rādhā Carana Goswāmī
Śri-dāmā-nāṭaka	---	" " "
Satī Candrāvalī	---	" " "
Amar Sinha Rāṭhaur	---	" " "
Tana Mana Dhana Gosāīn Jī Ke Arpaṇa		" " "
Bhaṅga-Taraṅga	---	" " "
Buḍhe Muṅha Muhāse	---	" " "
Jaisā Kāma Vaisā Parināma (or Śikṣādāna)		" Bāla-Kṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa
Padmāvatī (T)	---	" " "
Śarmiṣṭhā (T)	---	" " "
Bāla-Vivāha	---	" " "
Venu-Saṃhāra	--	" " "
Rail Kā Vikaṭa Khela	--	" " "
Bṛhannalā	---	" " "
Kalirāja Kī Sabhā	---	" " "
Bhārata-Durdaśā	---	" Pratāpa Nārāyaṇa Miśra
Śakuntalā (T)	----	" " "
Kali-Kautuka Rūpaka	---	" " "
Mādhavānala Kāma Kandalā		" Śāligrāma
Mayūra-dhwaja	---	" "
Lāvanya-vatī	---	" "
Puru-Vikrama	--	" "
Abhimanyu-Vadha	---	" "
Mahārāṇā Pratāpa	---	" Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Dāsa
Mahārānī Padminī	---	" " "
Dukhinī Bālā	---	" " "
Dharmālāpa	----	" " "
Kṛṣṇā Kumārī (T)	---	" Rāma Kṛṣṇa Varmā
Padmāvatī (T)	---	" " "
Vīra Nārī (T)	----	" " "
Sajjād Sambul (T)	---	" Keśava Rāma Bhaṭṭa
Shamshād Sausan (T)	----	" " "

Man-Bhāwanā (T)	---	by	Gopi Nath (Purohit)
Prema Līlā (T)	----	"	" "
Venice Kā Vyāparī (T)	--	"	" "
Gosankata Nāṭaka	--	"	Ambikā Datta Vyāsa
Bhārata Saubhāgya	--	"	" "
Veṇī-saṃhāra (T)	--	"	" "
Lalitā Nāṭikā	--	"	" "
Rukmiṇī-Pariṇaya	--	"	Ayodhyā Sinha Upādhyāya
Pradyumna Vijaya	--	"	" "
Mayanka-Mañjarī	--	"	Kiśorī Lal Goswamī
Caupaṭa Capeṭa	--	"	" "
Nāṭya-sambhava	--	"	" "
Śankara-Digvijaya	--	"	Baldev Prasad Miśra
Prabhāsa-Milana	---	"	" "
Mīrā Bāī	---	"	" "
Mādhurī Rūpaka	---	"	Kṛṣṇa Deva Śarana Sinha 'Gopa'
Vivāha-Viḍambana	---	"	Tota Ram
Madana-Mañjarī	---	"	Amāna Sinh
Bāla Khela	---	"	Dāmodar Śāstrī
Jaya Nāra Sinha Kī	---	"	Devakī Nandana Tripāṭhī
Kalijugī Janeu	----	"	" " "
Bhārata Ārata	---	"	Khadga Bahadur Mall
Mahārāsa	---	"	" "
Hari-Tālikā	----	"	" "
Kalpa-Vṛksa	----	"	" "
Bhārata-Lalanā	----	"	" "
Rati-Kusumāyudha	---	"	" "
Mṛcchakaṭika (T)	---	"	Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa
Venice Kā Vyāparī (T)	----	"	" "
Ratnāvalī (T)	---	"	Bal Mukand Gupta
Nyāya Sabhā Nāṭaka	----	"	Ratna Chand
Hindi-Urdu-Nāṭaka	----	"	" "
Sītā-Vana-Vāsa Nāṭaka	----	"	Jwālā Prasāda Miśra
Śakuntalā (T)	---	"	" "
Veṇī Saṃhāra (T)	----	"	" "

Candrakalā Bhānu Kumāra	---	by	Devi Prasād Pūrṇa (Rai)
Ranbīr Nāṭaka	---	"	Gopal Ram Gahmari
Vidyā Vinoda Nāṭaka	---	"	" "
Nāgānanda (T)	----	"	Sīta Ram (Rai Bahadur)
Mahāvīra-Carita (T)	-----	"	" "
Mālatī- Mādhava (T)	----	"	" "
Uttara-rāma-Carita (T)	-----	"	" "
Mṛcchkaṭika (T)	----	"	" "
Mālavikāgnimitra (T)	----	"	" "
King Henry V. (T)	----	"	" "
As You Like It. (T)	----	"	" "
The Tempest (T)	----	"	" "
Cymbeline (T)	---	"	" "
Measure for Measure (T)	----	"	" "
Othello (T)	---	"	" "
Hamlet, Prince of Denmark (T)	--	"	" "
Julius Caesar (T)	---	"	" "
King Lear (T)	---	"	" "
King Richard II (T)	--	"	" "
Much Ado About Nothing (T)	---	"	" "
Mālatī Mādhava (T)	--	"	Satya Nārāyaṇa Kaviratna
Uttara-rāma-Carita (T)	---	"	" "
Manganī Ke Miyān (T)	---	"	Ram Chandra Varma
Joan of Arc (T)	---	"	" "
Praphulla (T)	---	"	" "
Mevāṛa Patana (T)	----	"	" "
Mahārāṇā Pratāpa (T)	----	"	" "
Nūr Jahānm (T)	----	"	" "
Candra Gupta (T)	----	"	" "
Sītā (T)	----	"	" "
Bhīṣma (T)	---	"	" "
Rājā Rānī (T)	----	"	" "
Naṭī Kī Pūjā (T)	---	"	" "
Citrā (T)	---	"	" "
Acalāyatana (T)	----	"	" "

Samrāṭ Aśoka ---	by Rūpa Nārāyaṇa Pāṇḍeya
Āhuti (or Jayapāla) (T)	" " " "
Padminī (T) ---	" " " "
Kṛṣṇā Kumārī (T) ---	" " " "
Acalāyatana (T) ----	" " " "
Uṣa Pāra (T) ----	" " " "
Durgā Dās (T) ----	" " " "
Tārā Bāī (T) -----	" " " "
Shāh Jahān (T) -----	" " " "
Karuṇālaya ------	" Jaya Śaṅkara Prasāda
Prāyaścita ------	" " " "
Rājyaśrī ------	" " " "
Viśākha ----	" " " "
Ajāta Śatru ---	" " " "
Janmejaya Kā Nāga Yajña --	" " " "
Kāmanā -----	" " " "
Candragupta -----	" " " "
Skanda gupta -----	" " " "
Eka Ghūṇṭa ----	" " " "
Dhruva Svāminī -----	" " " "
Tilottamā (T) ----	" Maithilī Śaraṇa Gupta
Candra-hāsa ----	" " " "
Svapna-Vāsavadattā (T) ---	" " " "
Anagha ----	" " " "
Madhura-Milana ----	" Jagan Nātha Prasāda Caturvedī
Tulsī Dāsa ----	" " " "
Netronmīlan ----	" Miśra Brothers
Śiva Jī -----	" " "
Pūrva Bhārata -----	" " "
Uttara-Bhārata -----	" " "
Karbalā -----	" Prem Chand
Saṅgrāma ----	" " "
Durgāvatī ----	" Badri Nāth Bhaṭṭa
Candragupta -----	" " "
Tulsīdāsa -----	" " "

Kuru Vana-dahana	---	by Badri Nath Bhatta
Bena Carita	---	" " "
Cungī Kī Ummīdawārī	---	" " "
Labaḍ Dhondhon	---	" " "
Vivāha Vijñāpana	---	" " "
Miss American	--	" " "
Aśoka --	----	" Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Miśra
Sanyāsī	----	" " "
Rākṣasa Kā Mandira	----	" " "
Mukti Kā Rahasya	----	" " "
Rāja Yoga	----	" " "
Sindūra Kī Holī	----	" " "
Ādhī Rāta	----	" " "
Samāja Ke Stambha	----	" " "
Garuḍa-dhwaja	----	" " "
Pratāpa Pratijñā	----	" Jagannātha Prasāda 'Milinda'
Mahātmā Īsā	----	" Bechan Śarmā Ugra
Cāra Becāre	----	" " "
Ujabaka	----	" " "
Gaṅgā Kā Beṭā	----	" " "
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Vara- Mālā	-----	" Govind Vallabh Pant
Rāja Mukuṭa	-----	" " "
Angūr Kī Beṭī	-----	" " "
Antaḥ Pura Kā Chidra	----	" " "
Añjanā	----	" Sudarshan
Bhāgya Cakra	---	" "
Honorary Magistrate	----	" "
Bhīṣma	----	" Viśvambhar Nath Sharma
Kṛṣṇārjuna Yuddha	----	" Mākhan Lāl Caturvedī
Jyotsnā	----	" Sumitrā Nandana Pant
Siddhānta Swātantrya	----	" Seth Govind Das
Prakāśa	-----	" " "
Harṣa ---	----	" " "
Śaśigupta	----	" " "
Kulīnatā	----	" " "

Kartavya ---- by Seth Govind Dass
Vikāsa --- " " "
Sevā Patha --- " " "
Santosa Kahānī --- " " "
Mahatva Kise --- " " "
Pakistan --- " " "
Prema Yā Pāpa --- " " "
Garībī Yā Amīrī --- " " "
Tyaga Yā Grahaṇa --- " " "
Sneha Yā Swarga --- " " "
Navarasa --- " " "
Ekādaśī --- " " "
Sapta-raśmi ---- " " "
Panca-bhūta ----- " " "
Dāhara (or Sindha-Patana) --- " Udaya Śankara Bhatta
Candra Gupta Maurya ---- " " "
Vikramāditya ----- " " "
Kamalā ----- " " "
Anta-hīna-anta ---- " " "
Matsya-gandhā ----- " " "
Viśvāmitra ---- " " "
Ambā ---- " " "
Rādhā ----- " " "
Muktipatha ----- " " "
Sagara Vijaya ----- " " "
Strī Kā Hridaya ----- " " "
Ādhunika Ekānkī Nāṭaka ----- " " "
Duvidhā ----- " Prithvi Nath Sharma
Aparādhī ----- " " "
Sādha ----- " " "
Aśoka ----- " Candra Gupta Vidyalankar
Revā ----- " " "
Kāfir ----- " " "
Puṇya-Parva ----- " Siyā-rāma-śaraṇa Gupta
Dhīre Dhīre ----- " Vrindāvan Lal Varma
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Śrī Vatsa	----	by Kailash Nath Bhatnagar
Nakshe Kā Ranga	----	" Kumāra Hṛdaya
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Śivā Sādhanā	----	" " "
Pratiśodha	----	" " "
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Ananta Ke Patha Para	---	" " "
Ulat Pher	----	" G.P. Śrivāstava
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Mardānī Aurat	-----	" " "
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Suhāga Bindī	---	by Ganeśa Prasāda Dvivedi
Mudrikā	---	" Sadguru Śaraṇa Avasthi
Do Ekānkī	---	" " "
Valkal	---	" Śambhu Dyal Saxena
Jīt Men Hār	----	" Candra Śekhara Pande
Chalanā	----	" Bhagavati Prasada Vājapeyī
Uṣā Kī Vijaya	---	" Ved Paul Khanna
Abhiśapa	---	" " "
Indar Sabha	---	" Amanat Khan
Bhārata-Darpaṇa (or Kaumi Talwar)		" Krishna Chandra Zeba
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Mashriqī Hūr	---	" Radhā Shyām Kathāvāchak
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Rājā Dilīpa	----	" Gopal Damodar Tamaskar

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" " -- Shyam Sundar Das

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